

Voice and Vision in Language Teacher Education

**Selected Papers from the
Fourth International Conference
on Language Teacher Education**

**Edited by
Bill Johnston &
Kristen Walls**

CARLA Working Paper

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Voice and Vision in Language Teacher Education: Selected Papers from the Fourth International Conference on Language Teacher Education

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Introduction

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The Fourth International Conference on Language Teacher Education, organized by the University of Minnesota's Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA), was held in Minneapolis, Minnesota from June 2 – 4, 2005. It gathered over 250 participants from around the world, and comprised 87 presentations from 11 countries and a broad range of settings. Continuing the tradition of previous conferences (Bigelow & Walker, 2005; Johnston & Irujo, 2001; Tedick, 2004), the 2005 event included reports from research and practice in a wide range of countries, institutional settings, and types of language teacher education and teacher development. The present volume offers a representative selection of this work; the fourteen papers presented here include work in and across eight different national contexts, and concern teacher learning and teacher education in settings involving English as a Foreign Language (EFL), English as a Second Language (ESL), French immersion education, and Spanish and Japanese language instruction. This diversity of topics is mirrored by a range of topics and of genre—we include research reports alongside accounts of large- and small-scale practical reform projects in various contexts of language teacher preparation.

The chosen theme of the conference was *Voice and Vision in Language Teacher Education*. The concepts of *voice* and *vision* come from the work of Hargreaves and Fullan (1992), who presented the processes of growth and change in education and in teacher development as an interplay of voice—the individual voices, ideas, desires, and insights of teachers and teacher educators—and vision, which Hargreaves and Fullan see as the totality of already existing discourses, ideas, and concepts in the field. Thus development, learning, and growth come from the intertwining of fresh individual voices and shared understandings.

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The present collection of papers from the conference implicitly reflects this dual focus. The experiences, ideas, and reflections of individual practitioners and researchers in language teacher education from around the world interact with, respond to, challenge, and extend the discourses and conceptual frameworks we have come to share, and in this way push forward our understandings and our practice.

The conference followed the same successful format of former meetings. It was organized conceptually into four themes representing the most salient issues facing practicing language teacher educators in their work and also those conducting research on language teacher education, teacher learning, and teacher professional development. The four themes were:

- I. The Knowledge Base of Language Teacher Education
- II. Social, Cultural, and Political Contexts of Language Teacher Education
- III. Collaborations in Language Teacher Education
- IV. Processes of Language Teacher Education

The papers in the present volume follow this organization; each theme is described in more detail in the following sections.

I. The Knowledge Base of Language Teacher Education

The last ten years have seen the emergence of a substantial empirical and theoretical literature on the knowledge base of language teaching, with a particular focus on the content of this knowledge base and its place in language teacher education. Previously, the knowledge base of language teacher education was taken primarily to be a theory-based, decontextualized body of propositional linguistic information and other factual and procedural knowledge that language teachers needed to master and subsequently to “apply” in their teaching. The new scholarship on the teacher knowledge base, while acknowledging the importance of linguistic and other sources of knowledge, has introduced two far-reaching challenges to earlier conceptualizations. First, teacher knowledge has come to be understood as fundamentally skill-based and process-

oriented (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000); second, teacher education has increasingly been seen as inescapably and crucially located in concrete social, cultural, and institutional contexts (Johnson, 2006). This second contribution to the dialogue about the language teacher knowledge base reframes knowledge as being continually co-constructed in relation to these contexts, rather than something that is “out there” for teachers to internalize.

The five papers in the present section all offer contributions to this re-examination of the knowledge base of language teaching and its place in language teacher education.

The opening chapter, by Jean Clandinin, Pam Steeves, and Simmie Chung, is an extended version of the plenary address at the conference given by Jean Clandinin. Coming from the realm of general teacher education, the chapter offers an important framework for reconceptualizing teacher knowledge as narrative knowledge (see Johnson & Golombek, 2002 for an excellent set of examples of how this framework has been used in language education), and shows how it is possible for teacher education not just to incorporate teacher narrative knowledge, but, even more importantly, to be transformed by it. The authors highlight four different activities they use in their course called “Life in Elementary Classrooms.” Each activity, and the class as a whole, guides teachers to tell, retell and ultimately relive or reinvent their narratives, both in and out of the classroom. Learners and instructors brought in photos and memory box items, and reflected on carefully chosen readings. Through their vivid descriptions of each course component, the authors highlight how delicate and risky, yet also profound, the work of telling and retelling one’s stories can be. Their work underscores the importance of a supportive learning community with colleagues who listen carefully and respond mindfully and imaginatively. The article concludes with excerpts from one course participant’s retelling. Simmee’s story reveals the power of narrative knowledge in facilitating teacher development. This article is an important one for teacher educators across all contexts, as it deepens our understanding of the nature of the knowledge base of teachers and of the relationship between the knowledge base and the processes of teacher education.

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Michèle de Courcy's paper also considers how language teacher education succeeds, or fails, at transforming the ideas and attitudes that future teachers bring into the teacher education classroom. De Courcy analyzes the written work of her pre-service teachers' as they respond to different articles assigned in a unit on English language learners. She reports that the articles impacted how students wrote about and framed their future English language students and their own roles as future language teachers; some articles seemed to produce a more positive framing of key issues than others. To some degree, de Courcy's findings relate to Golombek & Jordan's (2005) work with teachers who appropriated discourse from scholarly papers to reframe and positively influence their identities as non-native English teachers. However, although de Courcy's students' writing reflected the general tenor and discourse of each individual article, she concludes that "a small amount of information, though provided with the best of intentions, may inadvertently reinforce previously held negative opinions about second language learners." Her chapter is a prime example of the intersection of voice and vision; more specifically, it reminds us of the importance of thinking carefully about the way the vision—the existing discourses of the field—is first presented to future language teachers.

Connie Zucker, in turn, challenges our assumptions about the relationship between teacher preparations and how languages—in this case, foreign languages in US high schools—are actually taught in classrooms. Zucker explores teachers' beliefs about teaching grammar, as well as how these beliefs are manifest in classroom practices. Through an analysis of interviews with teachers, classroom observations, and teacher-completed surveys, she concludes that teachers for the most part still teach grammar explicitly. At the same time, teachers strive to contextualize language forms and make classroom material relevant to students' lives. Significantly, the teachers in her study did not mention reflection or observing other teachers as important components in informing their beliefs or teaching practice. These practices were also absent from their teacher preparation experiences. Although the connection between teacher preparation experiences, teacher beliefs, and teachers' actual classroom practice is complex and varied, Zucker's study

shows that there is a link. Teachers' experiences as language learners and teachers-in-training influence their choices in the classroom, more so than reading research articles and attending professional conferences. Zucker's research suggests that there may be a serious disjuncture between a lot of language teacher education and the settings in which its graduates will teach; To redress this problem, language teacher educators need to pay more attention to the way languages are actually taught in schools. Zucker suggests that pre-service teachers are best served by education programs providing them with positive, realistic first-hand learning and teaching experiences including reflection and overt discussion about key language teaching issues.

The last two chapters in this section also take a close look at teacher behavior in classrooms and compare it to what is known from research findings on this topic. Atsuko Hayashi and Akemi Morioka look at what happens when Japanese teachers at a US university switch from a more traditional syllabus to one rooted in Content-Based Instruction (CBI). Their work speaks to the shift in teacher and student roles CBI necessitates, as well as the potential benefits therein. The CBI approach puts content, in this case Japanese culture, at the core of the learning goals. Teachers' roles change from being language and cultural experts to being facilitators and collaborators. Although their data primarily comprise student interviews, Hayashi and Morioka assert that once teachers can learn to relinquish control of students' learning outcomes a burden is lifted, freeing them to attend to students' needs and progress. Their data show that once students of Japanese get through an initial adjustment period they respond positively to being more actively involved in the language learning process. Hayashi and Morioka's chapter has relevance for language teacher educators in that it invites us to explore multiple possibilities for student and teacher classroom roles. Their work also suggests that teachers-in-training may benefit from first-hand experience as learners in courses such as those grounded in CBI. More generally, this chapter challenges language teacher educators to consider how content-based approaches, whose effectiveness is becoming increasingly apparent in the research literature, can best be integrated into the processes of teacher education.

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Michèle de Courcy and Karita Mård-Miettinen, in turn, investigate the classroom behaviors of French immersion teachers in late immersion programs at Australian high schools, and how successful these behaviors are in promoting language learning. The paper focuses on the immersion students' views of their teachers' teaching practices. From the students' perspective, teachers who consistently insist that students speak the target language, both in and out of the classroom, are viewed positively for their role in facilitating language acquisition. Students also report that they learn best when teachers help them to "bridge the gap between what they could say and what they wanted to say." The authors' findings suggest that "teachers play an important role in the immersion classroom by maintaining the second language context, using appropriate teaching strategies, responding to the needs of the learners, and fostering a supportive learning environment in which students feel safe to extend their output in the target language." De Courcy and Mård-Miettinen's research raises the important issue of how such teaching behaviors can best be promoted through immersion teacher education. The form their research takes, on the other hand, reminds us of the importance of regularly asking students for feedback as a part of the teacher development process.

II. Social, Cultural, and Political Contexts of Language Teacher Education

As mentioned above, researchers and practitioners in language teacher education have increasingly realized the central importance of social, cultural, and political context in understanding and improving language teacher education. This has led both to a heightened sensitivity to the particular circumstances in which language teacher education is carried out, and a growing sophistication in research.

The present section includes two chapters that together demonstrate two sides of the same coin. The first, by Matthew Clarke, takes a micro-approach, and highlights the effectiveness of detailed, sensitive research procedures in the investigation of a language teacher education context, in this case the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the Persian Gulf. Clarke focuses his

study on the teaching identities of Emirati women who are in a bachelor's degree program for teaching English to young learners. Following much recent research (e.g. Varghese et al., 2005), Clarke frames the process of learning to teach as “the discursive construction of a teacher identity within an evolving community of practice.” Specifically, he shows how the teachers framed their identity around a constructed opposition between their own purported “progressive” approach based in educational values originating primarily outside the UAE, and what they classified as the “traditional” approach currently prevalent in Emirati classrooms. He goes on to explore how and why the student teachers embraced the discourses of progressive education so fully, even when this meant rejecting much of their own past schooling. The picture is complicated by the presence of important postcolonial elements, notably the fact that many teachers in UAE are presently non-Emirati guest workers. In his analysis, Clarke suggests strategies teacher education programs can employ to foster discourses which are less oppositional or adversarial. For example, he recommends encouraging student teachers to understand the ways in which their identities, and those of ‘traditional’ teachers, are socially and politically constructed and interrelated.

The second chapter, by Anu Virkkunen-Fullenwider, takes a macro-perspective, and describes the processes by which a trans-national reform effort—in this case, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF) of the Council of Europe—is adapted to the particular requirements and institutional realities of one country, Finland. Virkkunen-Fullenwider explains how the Finnish government's decision to implement CEF impacted language teachers and language teacher educators throughout the Finnish educational system, from kindergarten to university. For example, once the Finnish National Board of Education altered the core curricula for all elementary, junior high and high schools on the basis of CEF scales, teachers have had to learn to incorporate the precise and lengthy CEF descriptors and learning outcomes in their teaching. This involves a great deal of coordinated negotiation and

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discussion to ensure that teachers can develop a relatively uniform understanding of how CEF descriptors translate into student behavior and performance in the L2. Virkkunen-Fullenwider's work raises important questions about setting priorities in language teacher education. For instance, what, if anything, must be eliminated from teacher education curricula to make room for the work of interpreting and internalizing CEF standards? To what extent should university-level language teaching match what is required of elementary, junior high and high school teachers? Virkkunen-Fullenwider's work reminds us of the complex ecology of educational reform, and of teacher education's crucial role in aligning with other components of the system.

III. Collaborations in Language Teacher Education

At the Language Teacher Education Conferences over the last years, there has been an increasing awareness of the importance of collaborations between language teacher educators and other groups, institutions, and individuals involved in education—to the extent that, beginning with the second conference in 2001, a separate theme of collaborations was added to the structure of the conference.

The three papers in the present section give an indication of the breadth and significance of this aspect of work in language teacher education. They span four different countries and three very different kinds of collaboration.

Alison Kirkness's chapter, set in a business program at a tertiary institution in New Zealand, details the frequently-encountered and ever problematic area of collaboration between ESL specialists and content teachers. Kirkness, a language teacher educator, collaborated with teachers in the Faculty of Business to help them assess, understand, and respond to their first year international students' language and learning needs. She explains that, perhaps typical of many contexts, nearly half of the teachers with whom she was supposed to collaborate did not take advantage of her expertise. She suggests that her experience parallels what Crandall and Kaufmann (2002) name as one of the primary challenges to language teacher educators:

convincing content faculty to participate. Kirkness's study speaks to the need for formal structures, supported at all levels, to create the space and climate necessary for teachers to collaborate in working out how to best meet their international students' needs. Furthermore, Kirkness notes that many of the teachers' concerns centered on the challenge of attending to international students' language needs while adhering to departmental expectations of covering content, another constant difficulty in language education. On a more positive note, Kirkness reports that all the forms of support she offered were well-received and appreciated. The teachers involved in the study, including Kirkness herself, benefited from the opportunity to reflect critically on their work. Kirkness' paper is an inspiration to language teacher educators working collaboratively with content teachers, encouraging us to start small, persist, and make the best of the context within which we work.

In his chapter, John Plews gives an in-depth account of the process of setting up a bilateral program for ongoing teacher professional development involving Spanish teachers from Alberta, Canada and English teachers from Jalisco State, Mexico. One of the most remarkable aspects of the initiative described in Plews' paper is the breadth of individuals and institutions involved, both within Alberta and between the province and its Mexican partner. Plews explains that the goals of the collaboration are "to establish sustainable, core international components specifically for the professional development of practicing SL teachers and within SL student teacher education." Plews' work reveals the amount of time and energy necessary for effective collaboration on a large scale, but also the amazing potential for fostering cooperative, productive partnerships among stakeholders from the provincial government, universities and school boards within each participating country. Together the participants in the initiative outlined ideal long-term and short-term outcomes of their project, as well as measures of success. Plews reports that such collaboration led to expanded vision, new possibilities, and quality programming which would not have been possible if the stakeholders had worked independently.

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Finally Jill Swavely, James Perren, and Shartriya Collier describe the difficulties inherent in the very desirable project of bringing the processes of a teacher education program closer to the schools in which graduates of the program are to teach. The paper details their work with in-service mainstream teachers who were completing a teacher education program while simultaneously teaching in K-8 (kindergarten to eighth-grade) inner-city schools. The project started with the goal of developing and implementing a context-sensitive program to support teachers' work with their English language learners (ELLs). The authors found that even with the best intentions, it was difficult to mesh their university-based frames of reference and goals with the teachers' needs and contextual constraints. For example, because of the nation-wide emphasis on standardized testing and a mandated curriculum, the teachers had neither the time to engage fully in the coursework nor the flexibility to integrate the new theoretical and academic concepts into their teaching. Swavely, Perren, and Collier's thoughtful reflection on their own assumptions and beliefs, the relationship-building process they engaged in with the teachers, and their project as a whole provide useful insights into the amount of time, energy, and compromise that developing a context-sensitive teacher education program involves. Their work also underscores the importance and power of reflection on the part of teacher educators, and the crucial role of dialogue in language teacher education. The authors write that "the success of our collaboration in a school-based ESL teacher training program ultimately correlated with the extent to which we were able to facilitate a plurality of views."

IV. Processes of Language Teacher Education

The fourth and final section of the present book brings us back to the essential melding of research and practice that has been the watchword of the Minnesota conferences since their inception in 1999. At that time, it was noted that in the great majority of cases, those who conduct research on language teacher education are at the same time its principal practitioners. This means that there exists an unusual degree of resonance between our research endeavors and

our work in the language teacher education classroom. It suggests that, more frequently than is the case in other educational research, our work is reflexive in nature (Hamilton, 1998; Loughran & Russell, 2002); and it reminds us that our theoretical reflections have, or can have, direct practical consequences for our daily encounters with students of language teaching.

The four papers in the present section vividly exemplify these generalizations. The first two chapters constitute systematic and in-depth reflections on the authors' own teacher education practice. Both focus on innovations. In the first, Kimberley Brown and Kimberly LeVelle describe with painful but valuable honesty the ecological consequences of a radical reform in the teaching of methods classes within the TESOL certificate and MA programs in which they work. Their goal was to implement a Post-Methods pedagogy in line with Kumaravadivelu's (2003) influential book, *Beyond methods: Macrostrategies for language teaching*, including revised assignments focusing more on the processes of observation and reflection, "moving away from a cookbook approach to presentation of Methods ... [and] involving students in co-creating and revising dimensions of the course." Through their careful reflection, both during and after the two courses, the authors arrive at an understanding that there were a number of "perceptual mismatches" which contributed to the challenges students and teachers experienced. Their descriptions of these mismatches, such as that between the instructors' expectations of the class and the students' expectations, are insightful and relevant to all teacher educators considering change in their programs or courses. Despite the difficulties described in their paper, Brown and LeVelle remain committed to the notion of a Post-Methods pedagogy. However, they realize that it is important to meet students where they are developmentally and intellectually, and to move gradually from there towards a Post-Methods curriculum. They understand that drastically changing just two classes within a program is problematical, and thus that it is critical to consider the entire context within which changes are made. Lastly, and importantly for language teacher education, Brown and LeVelle's study raises questions about exactly what Kumaravadivelu's Post-Methods framework means for teacher education.

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Clare Conway and Heather Richards also turn their researchers' lenses on their own teaching. In their chapter, they examine participants' reflections on a new teacher development program for teachers of English from China, organized at the authors' home institution in New Zealand. This paper highlights the effectiveness of teacher education programs which are centered on teachers' needs and teaching contexts. Conway and Richards conducted an in-depth needs analysis prior to their three-week intensive course so as to be able to deliver a meaningful and successful program. They also asked teachers to write reflective journal entries throughout the course as a means of deepening the learning process and providing the researchers with important on-going feedback. Conway and Richards utilize the needs analysis, teachers' journal entries, post-course reflections, and post-course questionnaires as sources of data for their study. Although the teachers and the teacher educators found the course to be successful in general, the authors believe that it could have been even better had they encouraged teachers to reflect throughout the course on how they could apply what they were learning to their own teaching contexts in China. Conway and Richards' work offers a clear example of the power of teacher education that is grounded in experiential education, as well as a hint that perhaps the teachers' learning would have been transferred to an even greater extent if there had been an opportunity to complete the reflective cycle and prepare to take meaningful action (Rodgers, 2002).

The last two papers offer conceptual reflections by practicing teacher educators on the content and form of language teacher education. In her chapter, Hacker Hande Uysal makes a strong argument for a much more intense focus on preparation for the teaching of writing than is generally the case in teacher preparation programs. Uysal first highlights several shortcomings of past and current approaches to educating L2 writing teachers. She draws attention to the reality that teachers often have not had first-hand experience as learners with newer, innovative approaches to teaching, thus making it tricky to internalize key concepts and fully appreciate their students' needs. Uysal then provides the reader with a useful synopsis and critique of recent models of curricula for L2 writing teacher education. The author argues for a model which

gives pre-service and in-service L2 writing teachers opportunities to reflect on their experiences as writers and students of writing. She then advocates for a course of study in which teachers have abundant first-hand experience writing across a variety of genres, and using a range of approaches. Then teachers need time and guidance in reflecting on their writing and connecting what they learn to their future teaching. A final key component for Uysal involves teachers being given support and space to reflect on their teaching. Uysal's work is useful in that it attempts to integrate what we already know about good language pedagogy with the processes and needs of language teacher education.

Finally, Rebecca Burns-Hoffman brings us neatly back to the topic of Section I of these proceedings—the knowledge base of language teacher education—by asking how this knowledge base is to be realized in practice and integrated into existing teacher education programs. Burns-Hoffman focuses on the importance of KAL, or knowledge about language, in language teacher education programs. She argues that KAL, or “the implicit knowledge of language users, the ability to reflect on the use of language by themselves and others, and the study of language itself,” should be a crucial component of any sound language teacher education program. Burns-Hoffman offers the reader a valuable and practical outline of a curriculum which could successfully incorporate KAL, drawing on her experience in the United States context, in which public school teachers complete high-quality portfolios as a means of gaining National Board Certification. The portfolio protocols lend themselves to the inclusion of KAL content in a variety of ways: For instance, teachers' portfolios must analyze and include classroom artifacts such as student work samples, transcripts of classroom sessions, and lesson plans. These artifacts make excellent materials for heightening teachers' awareness and knowledge of key KAL concepts. Burns-Hoffman's call for incorporating knowledge about language in practical ways into language teacher education programs offers a helpful step forward in the ongoing debate in our field about the place of linguistic knowledge in language teaching.

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Conclusion

The papers included in this volume reflect the fascinating and varied research and professional writing that is going on in the field of language teacher education. While the subject of the chapters is widely different, all of them speak to the crucial need for public discourse both on the practices we engage in as language teacher educators, and on the theoretical underpinnings of our work. In each paper, too, we see the close connection between research and practice—in many cases, those conducting the research are the same people engaging in the practice; and thus, the intimate relationship between voice and vision.

Beyond this, further thematic commonalities can be discerned. Many of the papers deal with the always fraught relationship between the work done in the teacher education classroom, and the actual business of language teaching. Another frequent subject is the vital role of reflection in our work as teacher educators—many of the chapters in this book originate in, and are built around, sustained processes of critical reflection on the part of teacher educators. Also, a great number of the papers reaffirm the importance of sustained, principled, and systematic dialogue with our colleagues, other stakeholders involved in the schools and programs in which we work, and above all else with our students. Lastly, each paper re-emphasizes the importance of a profound understanding of context, and of the very particular features of a given context that can make or break efforts at change and innovation.

Through each of these features, and through systematic professional discussion, we can nourish the hope that the preparation of language teachers can be re-conceived as a process of what Clandinin, Steeves, and Chung call “re-imagining their professional lives.” By our commitment to this reconceptualization, we are also committing to re-imagining our own professional lives through ongoing inquiry and dialogue.

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Creating Narrative Inquiry Spaces in Teacher Education

D. Jean Clandinin, Pam Steeves, and Simmee Chung
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We begin this paper with a story of a first meeting of a course, *Life in Elementary Classrooms*, with which we have been involved over many years¹. The teaching of this course has been an ongoing exploration of the ways we can engage teachers in narratively inquiring into what they know and how their knowing is expressed in their practices.

The First Class Meeting

With anticipation we smile and greet new faces coming through the door to assemble around a large center table made of several smaller tables squeezed together. On the table are a vase of flowers from September's late garden and a basket of muffins. The room is quiet for the first and only time. As the course unfolds over the weeks ahead, this 'joined together' table promises to become like a kitchen table as we share stories of our lives with one another.

We begin the class by asking students to tell stories of who they are and what brings them to the course. As instructors, we, too, are unsure of what we will say as our stories are shaped in the telling. We are hopeful that if we share our vulnerabilities, the table space will begin to build trust. Some students choose to tell safe stories but there are also unexpected tellings and wonderings about what this course might entail as their stories call forth other stories. Still there is a sense of unease that lingers. This is not what usually happens in a graduate-level seminar.

"What you know first stays with you," Pam reads from Patricia McLachlan's (1995) children's picture book. Learning to attend through the heart of children's literature, the book is the first of many bookends which will begin and end each class. After the reading we take turns mapping out the course as it will unfold:

We will ask you to read two or three articles each week to consider how researchers conceptualize research on teaching. The articles are provided to engage you in reflection and inquiry about teaching, not to suggest this is how teaching should occur for you. You will make your own sense of each article depending on your situation. We ask you to compose a dialogue journal each week addressed to us. Think of it as a letter in which you reflect on what you

¹ Pam first taught this course in the year she completed her PhD dissertation, a narrative inquiry with Jean as her supervisor. She continued to teach the course in collaborative ways for five years thereafter. For Pam, both taking the class and later living as a scholar with the Centre for Research for Teacher Education and Development has been a profound lifeshaping experience. Simmee has been teaching elementary school for 8 years and is currently completing her M. Ed. in literacy education. While on a sabbatical leave and transitioning back to university life, she selected the course because of its title 'Life in Elementary Classrooms', a topic with which she felt familiar. As the class unfolded, Simmee came to realize how powerful and important her own storied landscapes were in coming to know who she was/is as a teacher.

Jean, inspired by John Dewey's ideas and her own narrative ideas of curriculum-making, first taught the course in 1990. As her research on teacher knowledge progressed and she was encouraged by students in the course, the course increasingly explored course participants' stories of experience. The narrative inquiry into teacher knowledge and the course design evolved in inter-related ways.

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notice as you lay ideas in the articles alongside your practice. During class time we will form into small groups to discuss the articles. Then, as a large group, we will share our thoughts and wonders. The article groups will be shifting and fluid from week to week so that, along with our response to each of your letters, you will encounter many more perspectives to enrich the meaning you are making.

In each class we will also be involved in various activities designed to trigger reflection on your knowledge. Because much of our knowledge as teachers is narrative knowledge, telling stories of our practices, our storied landscapes and stories of who we are, is central to the course. We will form small story groups, sometimes called works-in-progress groups, that will remain the same. These groups will enable sustained conversation such that listening and response become gifts of the relationship. Eventually we will ask you to spend time looking across your stories to find common threads or tensions in order to imagine retelling and reliving our lives in classrooms. The retellings will form the basis for your end of term projects.

After this sharing we get up from the table and move around, pour coffee or tea, staying in the room. We purposely do not break away from one another. And then we continue, beginning the first of many narrative activities. On this first day we ask students to begin to write a storied memory of a time they felt they were learning. We tell them they will share the story with the members of their works-in-progress group next week. We spend some time with this activity and, too soon it seems, the light outside the window has faded. The class closes as Jean reads Lauren Mills' (1991) *The Rag Coat*. The final words to the picture book linger in the air: "All you need is people."

Narrative Underpinnings

We begin with this description of a first class meeting of a course taught for many years at the University of Alberta. The course is built on a set of three interwoven narrative conceptualizations that have emerged from a 25-year program of research. These narrative conceptualizations underpin what we believe is a narrative reflective practice approach, an approach that is important for engaging teachers in reconsidering their teaching practices.

The first narrative conceptualization is a view of teacher knowledge as experiential, embodied, emotional, moral, personal, and practical. Years ago Michael Connelly and Jean Clandinin coined the term "personal practical knowledge," which they defined as:

A term designed to capture the idea of experience in a way that allows us to talk about teachers as knowledgeable and knowing persons. Personal practical knowledge is in the teacher's past experience, in the teacher's present mind and body, and in the future plans and actions. Personal practical knowledge is found in the teacher's practice. It is, for any one teacher, a particular way of reconstructing the past and the intentions of the future to deal with the exigencies of a present situation. (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, p. 25)

We see teacher knowledge in terms of narrative life history, as storied life compositions. These stories, these narratives of experience, are both personal – reflecting a person's life history – and social – reflecting the milieu, the contexts in which teachers live. Teacher knowledge is both formed and expressed in context. These contexts in which teachers live and work are complex, and we adopted Clandinin and Connelly's metaphor of a professional knowledge landscape in order to represent this complexity. A landscape metaphor allows us to

talk about space, place and time. Furthermore, it has a sense of expansiveness and the possibility of being filled with diverse people, things, and events in different relationships. Understanding professional knowledge as comprising a landscape calls for a notion of professional knowledge as composed of a wide variety of components and influenced by a wide variety of people, places, and things. Because we see the professional knowledge landscape as composed of relationships among people, places, and things, we see it as both an intellectual and a moral landscape. (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995, pp. 4-5)

These narrative views of teacher knowledge as personal practical knowledge lived out and shaped by living within a professional knowledge landscape leads into a second narrative conceptualization underlying a narrative reflective practice approach. We view teacher knowledge as composed and recomposed as teachers live out their lives in the in-classroom and out-of-classroom places, in the professional knowledge landscape and off-school landscapes. Within this view it is important to attend to each teacher's ongoing life history, that is, their past, their present and future, and to the landscapes which have shaped them. Thinking narratively about teachers' lives and the knowledge that they compose and recompose as they live out their lives, comes from a narrative view of life as a story we live. These storied lives have multiple plotlines, shaped by our personal experiences as well as by social, cultural, linguistic and institutional narratives. They are also shaped by others' stories of us and our stories about ourselves, about our work and about others. Connelly and Clandinin (1994) wrote:

Thinking of life as a story is a powerful way to imagine who we are, where we have been, and where we are going. In this view people live lives and tell stories of those lives, and people are characters in their own and others' life stories... We live stories. When we talk to others about ourselves we tell life stories. (pp. 149-150)

The third narrative view is a view of teacher education as a possible place for sustained narrative inquiry into teachers' lives and the lives of students with whom they work. In this view, teacher education, pre-service, in-service and professional development education, is a process of learning to tell and retell educational stories of teachers and students. We imagine teacher education as a sustained conversation in which we need many responses, from diverse others, in order to be able to tell and retell our stories with added possibility. We imagine these conversations to be with theory, research, social conditions, people from diverse cultural groups, and people positioned differently on the landscape such as parents and early school leavers. These conversations, and conversations with other teachers, students and teacher educators, allow for a response-filled environment and encourage more mindful retellings.

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In teacher education courses, such as the one we are describing here, Connelly and Clandinin (2006) use four terms – “living”, “telling”, “retelling”, “reliving” – to structure the process of self-narration and of engaging in a narrative reflective practice approach. People are asked to tell aspects of their lives using a variety of methods (Connelly & Clandinin, 1998). These ‘tellings’ generate a variety of field texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), their term for data, including personal stories, photographs, memory box items, annals, family stories, and field notes, which are shared with others in the class and used to draft a narrative of each person’s ‘living.’ Through sustained response and people’s own inquiry into their lived and told stories, they begin to ‘retell’ their living, that is, to interpret their lives as told in different ways, to imagine different possibilities, to, as Heilbrun (1988) wrote, actively ‘write’ their lives. In university classes such as this course, we ask students to engage in the retelling through a narrative inquiry process. Most students engage only in retelling and imagined reliving. However, for students who are teaching at the same time as they are enrolled in the course, they sometimes begin to relive their stories in terms of the new retold narrative. It is through telling and retelling, through inquiry into the lived and told stories – in other words, reliving – that changed practice occurs.

In the work we have done in this course, we know that learning to tell stories is difficult, risky work. Trust among story tellers and story listeners is central. But we have also come to know that retelling stories is even more difficult than telling stories.

Retelling requires a vivid imagination as people try to rethink their stories in the context of the stories of others with whom they interact. Class participants, in a kind of microcosm of inquiry more generally, need to explore their stories. Conversations that draw out the conditions under which stories were lived and told move through imaginative suggestions in order to allow the storyteller to retell a new story. Class participants need to join in this process in a spirit of inquiry and create an inquiry-oriented conversation that moves from the story told to the possibility of a retold story. (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998, p. 252)

These three narrative conceptualizations underlie our practices of teaching and teacher education. What we are learning to do when we educate ourselves is learning to tell and retell our stories and learning to tell and retell the stories of our students. Telling, retelling through narratively inquiring into our stories, and responding to both the telling and retelling is at the heart of our work and of this article.

A Course Rhythm: A Rhythm of Telling, Responding and Retelling

The rhythm we work to create in the class grows out of these three narrative conceptualizations. We know the importance of creating spaces for telling aspects of participants’ lives, so each week we engage students in an activity designed to allow them to tell some aspect of their lives, such as writing a story of learning, a story of coming to know diversity, composing an annal, or telling the story of a photograph. We know the importance of sharing these life tellings within a sustained response community, so we establish course-long works-in-progress groups of 3 or 4 people where each week these tellings are shared. We know the importance of reading and engaging with scholars’ writings, and so each week a carefully selected and sequenced set of articles are read. Each week each student writes a dialogue journal in the form of a letter about

what those articles called forward for them. Each week, first in small and then large groups, these articles and students' responses to the articles are discussed. Each week we respond to their dialogue journals, writing our stories in the margins of their writing. We know the importance of triggering the emotional, the moral and the spiritual, and so in order to create a classroom context of safety and mutual vulnerability, we bookend the class by reading children's picture books or fragments from other writers.

The course challenges both faculty and students because participants are required to inquire into their knowledge as expressed in their practices. These inquiries, turned inward, create unfamiliar tensions as participants co-compose their storied knowledge and become active participants in the classroom learning.

We know that the course works because, over the years, students have told us their experiences in the course shifted their practices, made them better teachers, helped them understand their students' lives as more complex unfoldings, and helped them to understand the power of story in the lives of their students. But the power of engaging in some of the narrative reflective practice activities can manifest itself outside of such a course. People, alone or in small groups, can begin to awaken to their narrative knowing and can begin to shift the stories they live and tell. In this paper we outline three such activities that lead up to a final activity, composing a retelling.

One Reflective Practice Activity: Telling and Retelling a Photograph

One course activity is to bring a photograph to class, a photo of them or a photo they took. Students are invited to look across the expanse of their lives to choose. We suggest they rummage through belongings to rediscover photographs tucked away in drawers, in albums, or on dusty shelves. We know students often spend thoughtful time choosing which photograph to bring to share with others.

We read the book *Grandad Bill's Song* by Yolen (1994) to set the tone to begin the photo sharing class. The book, filled with photos, tells the story of a small child's grandfather's life. The child comes to know the multiplicity of Grandad Bill's life, as it is brought close to him through the stories others tell of him around photographs of him. As we share our photos, we are brought in close to one another's lives, too, as we begin to learn more about our own lives.

By the time we share photographs we have read Hankins' (1998) work where she writes that, when she was growing up, many stories were of things that "you just don't talk about" (p. 87). Hankins wrote that some of her difficult childhood stories resonated with the stories that students she found challenging were living out. As she awakened to this, she was more thoughtfully able to reach out to her students' worlds, as they became a part of her story.

Pam joined a works-in-progress group. With images from *Grandad Bill's Song* and ideas from the readings in mind, the group members listened attentively as one student showed her photograph and began her story. Pam marveled at the slightly yellowed black and white photograph of a little girl outside her prairie farm on her sixth birthday. It was a "once upon a time" story. At first quiet and reflective, students began to wonder: "Why did you choose this photograph?" "Where

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did you find it?" "Who took the picture?" "What happened afterward?" "Tell us more about your farm." "Do you ever go back there?" "Look at your long hair." The photograph captured a time, and the inquiry into the photograph began as the wonders took the owner of the photograph backward and forward in time, inward to felt emotions and outward to the events depicted in the photograph, with attentiveness to place.

Then Pam was invited to share her photograph. As instructors, we love feeling that we too are "always in the making" as Maxine Greene (1993, p. 213) would say. We too are the continuing stories of our lives becoming. In Pam's photograph, she and her sisters were standing together laughing, their arms around each other. In the background was her parents' dining room with silver trays and candlesticks, and fine paintings on the wall. One sister, Wendy, had prepared scampi. Wine glasses were filled for celebrating. There was a party going on.

Simmee, a member of the works-in-progress group, asked Pam about the picture. She guided Pam backward in time as she asked why the photograph was important then and now. Pam said, "It was the last time my sisters and I were all together for 17 years. There were many relatives at the party in our parents' home, including my Mum and Dad, but you do not see them in the photo." Pam, caught into telling the story, realized there was so much more that a viewer of the photograph did not see. Responding to questions, Pam began to reveal, to herself and to her classmates, the multiple story strands that lived around the edges of the photograph. As Pam began to retell her story, she realized the photograph was a cover story, a story only now becoming visible to her in the photograph sharing activity. Pam retold the story in the following way.

In the months before this photograph was taken, my Mum suffered a debilitating stroke. My Mum was teetering on the edge. It was hard for her to go on. Dad had bought a new house for Mum and we were there to show we were still a family. My Dad was trying to fix everything up, to somehow continue our life in the way it was before this time. But our life would never go back. With thousands of dollars of hospital bills looming for my Mum's intensive care in the United States, my Dad had to sell the house and many household belongings from my childhood memories. How long I kept that photo with me without really inquiring into what it meant.

The photo telling experience lives with me as a teacher educator. As I inquired into the photograph, I see how my photograph of three sisters was composed of multiple story strands, providing me with many more story threads to connect me to my students' experiences. How hard it is to give up stories in transition if we are not able to become part of new stories to live by. My photo sharing session is helping me attend more carefully to the diverse students who enter schools and universities, places where, too often, the institutional plotlines are based on white middle class narratives of experience. I think about how diverse students' lives may be interrupted and in transition as mine was.

A Second Reflective Practice Activity: Telling and Retelling a Memory Box Item

On the night we share the memory box activity, we gather in anticipation of the stories, our treasures in hand. We have had a week to think about what we want to bring, an artifact that is important to who we are becoming as we compose our lives. We know that who we are is entwined with what we know and how we teach. On this night John brought an eagle's feather, Margot has a piece of twine, and Mavis brought a rolled up scroll that hung in her house for many years. While we are all curious about the stories that might unfold, we, as instructors, know that what we see now will never look the same again once we've heard the stories.

Pam opened the activity with the children's book *The Worry Stone*, by Dengler (1996). The book invited our imaginations, our emotions and our aesthetic feelings through the evocative storytelling and vivid watercolor paintings. We joined an old woman and a young boy. Sitting alone on a park bench, an old woman is drawn back to her childhood and her grandfather's stories as she tries to explain the worry stone in her hand to a lonely young boy who comes to rest beside her. As the story unfolds, her memory box item, a worry stone, allows a connection to be made between her and the young boy at her side.

The memory box night comes a week after we read Florio-Ruane's (2001) work on creating an autobiographical book club with beginning teachers. The book club becomes a space for the teachers to safely inquire into issues of culture, literacy and schooling as they converse around the shared experiences triggered by reading the autobiographies of diverse authors. Florio-Ruane sees conversation as a transformative experience, an idea that resonates with the Noddings (1993) article on moral dialogue. Noddings describes dialogue, being present to one another in conversation and also encountering one another in relationship, as the way we can engage in a fully human education.

We began the memory box activity by asking students to place their memory box item on their annal, a kind of time line drawn earlier in the course that in some way represents their lives so far. The annals are diverse, some zig zag lines, some lines with branches, some layered lines. With their pencils they marked the spot – a kind of signpost of the memory box occurrence on their lifeline. We asked students to keep time in mind as they remembered a particular person or event triggered by the memory box item.

For Janine, the sharing of a memory box item seemed particularly important. Janine, a graduate student, was teaching undergraduate level students. Often in conversation she expressed her concern about marks (grades), about telling students what they were supposed to know, about dealing with those in superior positions who told her what she was supposed to know, and her own feelings about these things when she was experiencing her first university teaching assignment. Teaching for Janine seemed tension-filled.

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It was as part of the memory box activity that Janine began to tell and retell another story of what it might mean to be a teacher. Janine brought a tattered ABC picture book to class, a special childhood book. She told of the fun and excitement she experienced when her Dad joined in daily family routines. The picture book called forth memories of her as a small child sitting in the bathtub, her dad perched beside her on the edge of the tub listening as she read the ABC's with every turning page. This was a special time in her story of who she was becoming.

Janine's story of learning with her Dad was one in which he was present as a responsive listener. Janine knew the ABC's were important to her Dad and so they were important to her and she learned to tell them. The cherished book, her memory box item, triggered powerful feelings for Janine. She knew she was uncomfortable with the stand-and-deliver way of teaching and learning that too often occurred at the university. Traveling back to her experiences of the long ago time and place of her childhood, Janine recalled the relationship and the experiential responsive teaching of her father as key to how she knew herself as a learner. In her retelling assignment, Janine re-imagined how she would teach her university classes in the future. She began to imagine providing students with experiences to engage them, as well as valuing relationships between teachers and students rather than transmitting information to students made passive by one-way communication. As Janine talked passionately about the experiences her memory box ABC's picture book evoked for her, we engaged our imaginations and helped her to retell her story of being a teacher.

A Third Reflective Practice Activity: Using Readings as a Reflective Starting Point

David is a high school science teacher, working on an education doctorate on a part-time basis. Triggered by the articles on identity making and his dialogue writing about that, David began to tell stories about his culturally diverse students, students he worked with each day before class. He connected his stories to the articles that spoke to how not only our identities as teachers are in the making, but so too are the identities of our students. Being a Caucasian teacher in a multicultural secondary school, David noticed how student groups were formed around ethnicity. He described a scene where East Indian students gathered in one part of the corridor, an Asian group lounged in another, and Caucasian students mingled together. David told our class how he initially chose to ignore the "tension" between the groups of students because of his own fears. Perhaps he, too, perpetuated what he had learned, that is, it is better to ignore stories of tension because opening up tensions creates spaces of uncertainty, spaces of not knowing. David's stories highlighted Taffy Raphael's metaphor (in Florio-Ruane, 2001) of how stories can become "museum pieces," that is, we tell them but leave them "untouched," just as we sometimes do as we tell stories around plotlines of diversity. As David told his story of himself as a student, he realized he had not examined cultural issues such as social and economic inequalities, discrimination, and oppression of minority groups. These issues were considered *too* controversial. While engaging in these narrative reflections both in and out of school, David wondered why he did not ask his students why they segregated themselves by ethnicity. He began by first engaging in a conversation with his wife, a woman of East Indian heritage. He wondered if he could gain a glimpse into the storied world of his students of similar heritage.

Trusting his classmates, David shared how he decided to travel to a place of tension where he explored the gaps and the silences in his classroom. Not knowing what to expect, David asked his students why they grouped themselves according to ethnicity. As David told what happened, we were awakened by his students' stories of culture, identity and their longing to belong. His East Indian students told David why they liked to refer to themselves as "Brownies." The stories David told of the students made us wonder how they were making sense of their unique worlds and how they were shaping their identities.

On that day, by asking a question and thus creating a space in his classroom, David empowered his students to share their voices and to teach others their ways of knowing. In Noddings' article (1993), the author noted that dialogue has the capacity to either disconnect us from one another or to connect us to one another. As David took his experience from our university class to his high school class, he began to realize he wanted to create an environment where his students learned how they were unique yet connected to one another in their shared experiences. He hoped they learned that they were not alone in their experiences, dilemmas and wonders. He hoped they learned their voices, no matter what color or label, were noteworthy and special. David, in his retelling and reliving, opened a space to engage a tension, to begin genuine dialogue.

These three activities opened up spaces to begin retelling and, for some students such as David, led to reliving stories, to changed practices. We also asked each person to look across all of their 'tellings' from the course and, near the end of the course, to begin to draft a retelling, that is, to interpret their lives as told in different ways, to imagine different possibilities. We noted earlier that retelling stories is difficult work. We want to share fragments of Simmee's retelling to give a sense of this process. Simmee, a teacher of young children, is spending one year out of her classroom in order to study at the university. She used a chapter book format for writing her retelling.

A Fourth Reflective Practice Activity: Fragments of a Retelling

Chapter 1: Changing Landscapes

Why do I teach? Why do I teach the way that I do? Why am I so adamant and passionate about learning how to further improve my students' learning, particularly those considered "at risk"? As an educator, I find myself having so many more questions than answers. Realizing that there was much more I needed to learn as an educator, I decided to apply for a Professional Improvement Leave last year.

As I planned out my courses for the upcoming year, I stumbled across the narrative inquiry course. Although my area of focus was in the Language Arts, I thought perhaps this might be a good course to take. After all, having taught in a variety of school settings and working with diverse students, shouldn't I know something about inquiring into life in the elementary classroom? What I didn't know back then was how much this course experience would reshape my thinking, my ways of knowing as an educator. This course, my works-in-progress groups, and my professors, taught me the importance of reflecting on who I was, my childhood experiences, and who I was becoming as an educator.

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In *Telling Teaching Stories*, Connelly and Clandinin (1994) wrote that it is our past, present and future experiences that are central to the curriculum of teacher education through our life stories. As I began to attend to my narrative landscapes, I realized my ways of knowing from my past would forever be a part of me. My past would shape the present and it is this knowing that has enabled me to reconstruct and “shape” my future stories that are still in the making. Through knowing pieces of myself, I have come to better know others, who I am as an educator and why I teach. My past experiences are all bits and pieces of my “wholeness.”

Short and Burke wrote, “Inquiry and change for us often begins with a vague feeling of tension that we may not be able to articulate” (1996, p. 97). I think back to the first day in this course where I was asked to tell my story and I listened to the stories of others around our table. I think about the “safe” story that I told my classmates, purposefully leaving gaps and silences in the story I was unwilling to tell. As I learned to trust my classmates, I began to tell my story in between the margins.

I was drawn to a photograph of myself as a child. “Attend to the edges, look at the gaps, the silences,” I can still hear Pam and Jean gently saying to us. As I continue to examine this picture, I realize that I am able to see through different lenses. I see a different way of knowing. I can feel the anxieties and the vulnerability that lives and breathes within those eyes. I know I don’t have to journey far in order to imagine her thoughts. That timid, fragile child who is seeking to make sense and understand her place in the world is the same girl that I often see when I look at my reflection. Today, I am going to invite you to see the world from the perspective of this little girl and her ways of knowing...

Chapter 2: The Little Girl

My parents met in Hong Kong and decided to move to England for greater opportunity, in hope of a more prosperous life. They owned a small “Fish and Chip” shop where my two siblings and I would spend most of our time. There are many Asian families who do not believe in having a babysitter and our family was no exception. So when I was a baby, my mother literally carried me on her back. She would securely strap me behind her using a sturdy piece of cloth. I remember how I took comfort in being close and safe while my mother cooked with me firmly attached to her back. My parents wanted to shelter me from the “stormy weathers” inherent in life. They wrote me a script that they hoped would keep me safe from harm’s way. I listened to my parents and stayed close by. I was fearful of many things like the escalator steps that moved so quickly, I was sure they would swallow me up. What if I fell flat on my face? Every time we went on escalators, my father automatically lifted me into his arms and carried me. And when it rained in England, we didn’t just get little worms, we would get huge slugs that practically covered the entire sidewalk. My dad knew to carry me when it rained. And of course, there was my first week at playschool. I cried so much

that my sister was frequently taken out of class just so she could calm me down. There was much to fear in life and this was just the beginning. Now as a teacher of young children, shouldn't I protect my students from the harsh realities of the world? I think about the times I've watched over them, like a surveillance officer, wishing I could protect them. Often feeling the need to "run a tight ship" in my classroom—maybe then they would never get hurt. What I didn't realize then was how I was silencing the voices of my students just as mine grew silent as a little girl.

If I were to give this little girl a voice, she would plead, "Carry me, tell me what to do!" She wished someone could tell her what was going to happen next. This little girl didn't know how to write her story at the time. Today that little girl has a voice and her own story to tell.

Chapter 3: The Unknown

I was five years old when my parents announced that we would be moving to Canada. It was the same year I had to start kindergarten. Kindergarten represented another unknown. I was petrified. On the first day of school, when I was passed over to my teacher, I kicked her firmly in the shin. Speaking in my mother tongue (Cantonese), I pleaded to go home, but to my dismay, I had to stay. For the first time, I had to stand alone.

I cried many tears during my time in kindergarten, and with time, they became silent tears. I'll never forget the day we played the "Telephone" game. In this game, all the children have to sit in a circle. Somebody gets to create and pass on a secret message by whispering it to the person beside them. While we were playing the game, the boy sitting beside me skipped me. I thought it was an oversight at the time so I timidly told the boy that he forgot me. He ignored me and I started to cry. I didn't understand why I wasn't included or what made me so different from the other children. I desperately longed to belong. Through a face full of tears, I quietly told my teacher and she responded by telling me to "Shut up!" Embarrassed and feeling very alone, I made sure to be very quiet in kindergarten.

As an adult, my kindergarten teacher's stinging words still resound in my memories. With the demands of a busy classroom, I wonder how many times I have dismissed or "brushed off" a student. I wonder how my words unknowingly had a lasting effect on them and their ways of knowing. There are many children that are like me in my classroom. I see my story behind their worried eyes. My experience with exclusion as a young child reminds me of what kind of teacher I continually strive to be. As I lay my stories alongside theirs, I can see threads tying us together. I think about Maxine Greene's article (1993) and the stories of my classmates. I wonder how I can create a safe space for my children to share their voices and create a community where *everyone* belongs.

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When I first told this story to my works-in-progress group, they thoughtfully responded by asking questions about the gaps and silences. It was through our conversations that I realized they too had lived stories that were intertwined with mine. Everyday I came to our “kitchen table” realizing that I was and am never alone. We all belong. As I retell my story in this chapter, I find myself filling in the gaps, the silences.

Chapter 4: Standing In, Standing Out

Cantonese was my first language and I was fairly proficient in it. I spoke Cantonese mainly with my parents but I spoke English to my siblings and cousins. I had a slight British accent when I began grade school. Being *extremely* shy deterred me from sharing my thoughts orally at school. I learned how to read quickly in grade one. However, I hardly ever read aloud and, even when I did, my voice was barely audible. I would often escape into my own little world where I would lose myself in books. One comment on my grade school report card was, “Simmee likes to stay in the library and read by herself.” Looking back, I must have loved books because it was through stories that I explored the possibilities that maybe I wasn’t so different after all.

By the time I got to grade three, with my seemingly absent voice, the teacher determined I required remedial instruction. I left math class 3 times a week for remedial English instruction. This instruction consisted mainly of playing easy board games and reading simple words. On occasion, I would even get treats for my efforts. Every time I was pulled out of class, I felt embarrassed for being “different.” I wondered why I couldn’t stay and I did not understand why I was different. I did not want to be different. I wanted to scream and shout, “I am not dumb!” Instead I found myself not saying anything. The script was ready made. I would be a “struggling learner.”

Fortunately, remedial instruction stopped after a year. I was given my first standardized test where my test scores indicated that my reading skills were three years above grade level. The teachers were surprised at my achievement scores. I wonder if my learning was credited to the remedial program. As I continued to be immersed in English at school, I eventually lost all trace of the British accent. I found myself beginning to lose my ability to speak Cantonese fluently as well.

Throughout my schooling, I continued to be a studious student but a passive participant in oral activities. I was afraid to “stand out.” What if I got the answer wrong? I did not want to appear stupid to my peers or the teacher. Would my teachers think that I needed remedial instruction again? I just wanted to be like everyone else. I would act as a “stand in” in a script that was not my own.

Even as an adult, afraid to be judged, to be labeled, I find myself keeping my stories of inclusion and exclusion silent. These stories of tension seemed like weaknesses. I was afraid that my past would reveal who I was and, perhaps, dictate my future. I have come to learn that it is only in recognizing and sharing stories of “tension” that I will learn about the important gift I can give to my

students. I can truly say, “I’ve been there. I understand. I am here to listen.” Just as I did not want to live out the script and labels that were written for me, I am learning to be mindful about the character I play in the children’s stories they are authoring. I am learning to be careful not to write the scripts for the children. Have I silenced the voices of my students, especially those of diversity as sometimes I may have spoken for them or, worse yet, ignored their stories and experiences altogether? How often have I assumed that my English as a Second Language learners would appreciate differentiated treatment and the extra attention? Delpit (1995) might ask me about the times I “watered down” instruction because I did not understand and appreciate the knowledge my culturally diverse students already possessed. How often did I make the time to listen to their stories? How often do my assumptions about children create barriers to their learning, their *being*? If I ever drift off shore, I just think about that little girl and I can hear her voice.

I see how I lost a big part of my culture as a youth. I want my students to understand that differences have a place in society and a sense of community and belonging does not mean they need to lose themselves in the process. I am learning how important it is to incorporate their unique ways of knowing into our curriculum. If I truly want to empower my multicultural students, rather than having them become merely conformist to the standards of those who hold the “culture of power,” then I need to give them ample opportunities to become the authors of their own storied landscapes.

Chapter 5: Our Greatest Teachers

I read a letter in our class readings (Connelly & Clandinin, 1994) written by Sherri Pearce, a student teacher describing her teaching experience. Her statement, “I saw a world of pain and questions that I never sought to answer because it had never occurred to me to ask” (p. 156), called to mind, Jared, a former student of mine, who had a reputation for “disruptive” behavior. On the first day of school, I was told by an administrator that he was coded as a “Badapt” student, a behavior disorder combined with oppositional defiance. I wondered how my preconceived notion, my story of who Jared was, affected how I treated him. At the beginning of the school year, I was very strict with him and I often wondered why he seemed to have such a liking towards me, even when I disciplined him. It began to feel like my day would be dependent on whether or not Jared was having a “good” day. There were days when I was ready to rip my hair out, until I reached the point where I threatened to call his father to tell him of Jared’s behavior. The way Jared reacted to my disciplinary actions surprised me as he would grow fearful and would beg me not to call home. It was not until one day after school that Jared invited me to hear his stories and I learned about his life, something that would forever change our relationship. His story helped me understand him—without the labels. Jared shared his stories of adversity and struggles with me, stories about his mother’s death, his sister’s drowning, his

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father's anger. He also told me he hated to be singled out when I read with him while other children read in groups. As I laid my story of exclusion as a little girl alongside Jared's, I began to understand. This was my "awakening." Jared and this class remind me of how important it is to listen and to respect our students' stories. It is only then that spirits take flight and I can encourage students to reach new heights. At the end of the year, Jared wrote me a special note to thank me for being his teacher. This brought tears to my eyes as I thanked him for being mine.

Chapter 6: Movement into Adulthood

As I retell and relive my storied landscapes, I can see the threads, silences, and gaps. Pam and Jean asked us to develop and reflect on our annal at the beginning and at the end of this course and I began to see the fluidity in my life. I think about the movements I created for myself as an adult. I have come to the realization that what I thought was challenge was sometimes my fear of being dis/positioned and unpleasantly surprised, yet again. In my journey to belong, I often created change, before change happened to me. With unpredictable enrollment rates and uncertain job opportunities, I created movement in my professional life as I transferred from school to school.

Chapter 7: Spirits that Carry us from Day to Day

Ian Sewall's words, "As an educator I live in the frustration of knowing that I teach shore life to so many who live amongst the shifting floes" (1996, p. 6), made me think about how I can use stories to connect and embrace those that are lost, as we all are at certain times in our lives. I have learned how important it is to share stories with family, friends, colleagues, and my students. As I retold my stories to my works-in-progress group, I realized how it was these stories that kept me going from day to day and helped me realize that I am not the only one who occasionally "shifts away from shore." This class showed me that it is often the "unknowing" that teaches me so much. It is through open dialogue with my colleagues that I have learned—I am not alone in my inquiries and uncertainties about teaching and learning. Paley (1986) reminds us that, "No matter what age of the student, someone must be there to listen, respond, and add a dab of glue to the important words that burst forth" (p. 121).

Chapter 8: The Bigger Girl

When I first reflected on the photograph of me as a little girl, I saw fears and weaknesses. Now I see a part of me that still longs to belong, to be accepted, to be heard. I've come to know that I've tried to hide these parts of me, but they are an undeniable and important part of who I am. I have learned to see the strength in this little girl and the wealth of experiences she brings. Whenever I see children with fears, insecurities, and diversity, I can look into their eyes and see a part of me in them. I see in their eyes how much they want to belong and I realize how important it is for me to give them the time and space to be the authors of their own stories.

We can all be the authors of our own stories. With time and love, we would be fortunate to become a part of each others' stories. Maxine Greene (1993) once wrote that we need a moving and living curriculum that refuses "to grade anyone's story against a standard norm" (p. 219). Greene would have us create a society where individuals are encouraged to find their voices and in so doing write and tell their own stories as they live out the process of *becoming*. I have learned that it is not the titles or labels that others assign us nor is it the destinations we reach that define who we are. What is important is our journey. Life is a work in progress and we are *always* in the making.

Chapter 9: Time and Space to Imagine and Re-imagine

When I first began teaching, I taught my students the way I learned as a child. I recycled assumptions and prejudices in my classroom because that was part of my knowing. If I had looked deeper into my past experiences as a child, perhaps I would have come to know what it might be like to be a "labeled" student. Hankins (1998) reminds me how our stories, past, present, and future, are intertwined and are shaped by one another. Knowing why I did what I did, realizing the interconnectedness of my students' and my life helps me reconstruct my ways of "knowing" as a teacher. It has taken many years into my journey of "becoming" as a teacher to realize some of my own assumptions and beliefs. I am still learning.

Sometimes people think that school is just about learning math, language arts, etc... But what about learning about who we are? Why we teach the way we do? I am still learning about who I am as a teacher, a sister, a daughter, a friend, and a graduate student. I am learning about who I was, who I am now, and who I continue to strive to be. I am learning that all of my stories are uniquely mine and they all have a place. When I opened up my letter from the University this spring, I saw the words "Official Admission Approved." I was "officially" accepted into the Master's program. I was elated of course, but I realized I don't need a letter to make me feel like I belong or to know I have something to offer to the world, to my students' worlds. I can be a "world traveler" (Lugones, 1987). Lugones reminds me of this gift as she states, "... by traveling to their 'world' we can understand what it is like to be them and what it is to be ourselves in their eyes" (p. 17). Having the time and space to reflect on my stories with other educators has helped me understand how I can better attend to my students and give them the space to be, inter-be, and to become. It is my stories and the stories of others that keep me passionate. In teaching, it is the routines that give me a sense of order, but it is my rhythms that give my teaching life. The time and space to share our stories is where we can imagine and re-imagine the possibilities.

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Returnings: Imagining the Possibilities for Becoming Otherwise

We are gathered one last evening around our kitchen table. It's dark outside. The trees are bare as we head into December. There is a palpable feeling of energy, excitement and a hint of nervous tension as students begin to share pieces from their retelling projects. Everyone is curious to hear of where our diverse journeys have taken us as we retell who we are as educators. We listen and see the courage and passion in one another as teachers re-imagine their professional lives. Through retelling, the moving force and spirit of our lives have infused our becoming.

After sharing we quiet our voices to read the last picture book of class. Appropriately it is named *I'm in Charge of Celebrations* by Baylor (1986). We read the book in a 'round,' passing it along in a circle. It is an improvisatory act but we have shared enough to engage this way of working. As we pass the book along, one to another, we embody our profound gratitude and respect for the dialogic relationship we have come to know.

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Reflections on ESL Learners: Disrupting Preconceptions

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Introduction

Students who are preparing to be teachers come to university with certain preconceptions about what the world is like, what classrooms are like, and how students acquire literacy. It will be argued in this paper that the background and experiences of most teachers in training is not only not equipping them for the sorts of classrooms in which they will teach, but also that a small amount of information may even allow them to form false and potentially harmful attitudes about bilingualism in general and the needs of their future pupils in particular.

Australia is a multicultural country, comprising people from over 2000 different ethnic backgrounds. 20% of Australians were born overseas (though many of them in an English speaking country). 21% of people report speaking a Language Other Than English (LOTE) at home. In our schools, 30% of students are from a LOTE background. The languages most commonly spoken are, in descending order, Italian, Greek, Cantonese, Arabic and Vietnamese (Clyne & Kipp, 1997, 2002).

In Victoria, the state in which the author is located, 20.1% of people speak a LOTE at home. The LOTEs most spoken are, in descending order, Italian, Greek, Chinese and Vietnamese. In some parts of West and South Melbourne, over 50% of those over five speak a LOTE (Clyne & Kipp, 1997). Indeed Arkoudis and Davison (2002) report that, at one inner Melbourne secondary school, 95% of the students are from a LOTE background, with the largest group being Arabic-speaking.

However, as Ang (2001) and Miller (2003) note, the concept and status of multiculturalism has been recently contested, and “there is a recent conceptual shift toward traditional Australian qualities, values and ideals, and away from a valuing of diversity” (2003, p. 11). One “traditional Australian values” is that education has had assimilation as its aim and has not valued the diversity of cultures brought to educational settings by minority groups (Miller, 2003, p. 4).

In contrast to the children they will teach in metropolitan classrooms, Australian teachers and teachers in training are, conversely, increasingly monolingual and monocultural: “Most of these professionals are monolingual, [and] are trained in monolingual institutes using monolingual materials and assessment tools” (Clarke, 1999, p. 2). Borland (2001) maintains that the result of this is that “there still remains a lot of ignorance and mythmaking about language development, and, specifically, bilingual language development, much of which has been fuelled by well meaning, but not necessarily well informed English monolingual teachers” (p. 7).

Even the classification of a NESB (Non English Speaking Background) child is complex. As the authors of *Literate Futures* note, “NESB families range from business migrants to political refugee populations, from Indigenous students who speak a second dialect of English to children born in Australia of migrant second-language-speaking parents” (Queensland Government, 2000, p. 10).

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The funding of ESL provision has also been changed. Ives (2004) writes: “ESL specific funding has been untied and is currently delivered to schools within their annual global budget. It is now acceptable for schools to cater for ESL students with embedded strategies aimed at achieving measurable improvements in literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students” (p. 4) McKay (2001) argues that what is happening to ESL learners is that “rather than enabling ESL learners, through targeted funding, to enjoy the same educational opportunities as others, the government is ‘outstreaming’ ESL learners by insisting that they pass a set of literacy tests prepared according to the expected pathways of another set of learners in the population” (p. 221).

In summary, the reality for most ESL children is that they are now being educated in a mainstream classroom, by a teacher most likely not trained in ESL, to whom they are invisible (unless they are receiving targeted funding), and who is required to teach and assess them using literacy benchmarks designed for children whose native language is English. The benchmarks emphasize reading and writing so that oral language – the very aspect of English which ESL learners need in order to scaffold developing literacy skills in English – is neglected, even though attention to it is given in the curriculum. This process results in ESL children being identified as ‘failures,’ while allowing their need for specialist interventions to be sidelined.

In this paper, I will explore the results of an attempt to raise an awareness among our teachers in training of the importance of oral language in scaffolding literacy, and of the needs of children from diverse backgrounds.

Setting and Data Collection

The questions posed in this article will be explored using a discourse analysis of some writing by a group of pre-service teachers at a regional university in Australia. At this point, I wish to echo van Dijk’s (1993) caution that “discourse analysis, whether critical or not, may not make much difference, unless we are able to contribute to stimulating a critical perspective among our students or colleagues” (p. 280). This paper aims to start such a conversation.

The situation described earlier, that of a mainstream class including a high proportion of LOTE background children, is in stark contrast to the composition of the student group under discussion in this paper, and the classes in the regional town in which their institution was located. In that town, only 5% of the population were born overseas (compared with 20% for Australia as a whole). Also, of this 5%, two-thirds were born in an English-speaking country. Two percent of the town’s population (1,384 people) spoke a LOTE at home. The languages most spoken were Greek, Italian and Chinese.

Even though this student group was located in a very white, Anglo area, their situation is not unique in Australia. For example, Iles (1996) investigated a similar group of pre-service teachers in Tasmania. The focus of Iles’ paper was on the use of e-mail to create a virtual tutorial. However, in their e-mails, the students were reflecting on one of the same articles my students read (Gibbons, 1991). The parallels in the comments made in the Tasmanian students’ writing and those of the students in the present study are striking. As one of Iles’ students writes, “I was firstly amazed that 1 in 4 children in Australia are bilingual! I guess in Tassie [Tasmania] we are pretty much isolated from the general multiculturalism of mainland Australia” (Iles, 1996, p. 33).

Yet graduates of our program could be employed to teach in *any* mainstream primary school classroom, not just in largely monolingual rural and regional settings. It was recognized that they needed some preparation for the linguistic and cultural diversity they might be faced with in a classroom in a metropolitan setting.

Indeed, one of the graduates of the program undertook her Honours project (Forbes, 1998) in her multilingual, metropolitan, mainstream classroom. In the class she studied for her thesis on “The development of reading and writing skills in two ESL children,” 62% of the pupils were ESL children. At home, the 18 children spoke the following languages: Lebanese Arabic (2), Iraqi Arabic (2), Macedonian (2), Greek (1), Indonesian (1), Samoan (1), Urdu (1), Spanish (1), and English only (7). This class resembles one described by Clarkson and Dawe (1996) where, in a class of 25-30 pupils coming from 5-10 different ethnic and/or linguistic backgrounds, the teacher is most likely to be a monolingual English speaker.

The students whose writing will be analyzed in this paper were at the end of their first year of a four-year primary teacher education program. They were enrolled in the first-year literacy education subject, which was a year-long unit, with one hour of lecture and one hour of tutorial per week. One of the tasks the students were required to do was to submit three “reading reflections” on some set readings. Each week, the students were set an article to read related to the topic of that week’s classes. The students were each given a number between one and five, and were required to do the readings in the reading pack corresponding to their number. By having students in each class always reading five different readings, we were able to incorporate jigsaw activities on a regular basis in the tutorials. The task was set out for them as follows:

Table 1 – The Reading Reflections Assignment

The task:

Your lecturer will assign readings to you when the tutorial topics are allocated. Reflections on these readings are designed to help you synthesize and analyze a number of readings listed in the book of readings on each topic.

Your Reading Reflections are to be word-processed; referenced using the Harvard system and must include a reference list. They must be submitted to your lecturer by the due dates, listed below. Each Reading Reflection is worth 5% and will be approximately 800 words in length. Your Reading Reflection should include the following:

- a) What are the four most interesting issues related to this series of readings?
- b) What ideas and issues in the readings challenged your beliefs about learning and teaching in language and literacy?
- c) What do you believe are the most significant or valuable issues applicable to you as a pre-service teacher?
- d) What unanswered questions do you still have about this topic?
- e) Your reflection must include direct references to the series of readings.

To sensitize and prepare the students for situations they might face when they are teaching, and to address gaps the faculty perceived in the official documents, readings about diversity, broadly speaking, were included in their reading packs. The articles for the final reading reflection, which

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is the one analyzed in this paper, were about oral language, functions of language, ESL students, and Aboriginal students (focusing on the Aboriginal English dialect). The articles about ESL pupils the students read were: Burke (1993), Dufficey and Gummer (1991), Gibbons (1991), McEvedy (1986) and Murray (1989). Summaries of the articles can be found in the Appendix.

This paper will concentrate on the students' writing about ESL students. I considered the following questions:

1. Did what they read help to prepare them for teaching ESL students?
2. Did it change their pre-existing attitudes in either a positive or a negative way?
3. Was this something the students had thought about before?

On first reading the students' work, which was submitted after the end of the semester, I was initially struck by the ways in which ESL students were represented or "othered" by the student writers. As van Dijk (1993) notes, "The justification of inequality involves two complementary strategies, namely the positive representation of the own group, and the negative representation of the Others" (p. 263). In many of the essays, I found the students were enacting this justification of inequality by using the strategy of contrasting "us with THEM, e.g. by emphasizing 'our' tolerance, help or sympathy, and by focusing on negative social or cultural differences..." (p. 263).

I decided to explore this further by conducting a small research project, based on the essays. I wanted to explore the students' writing in more depth, so, after obtaining ethics clearance from the university, I asked students who agreed to participate to submit, anonymously, clean copies of their essays so I could conduct a discourse analysis of them.

Data Analysis

Thirty-seven anonymous essays were available for analysis, and were assigned a code based on the first initial of the author of the article about ESL pupils for that student's group, as follows: B1-8, D1-7, G1-7, M1-9 and M1-6.

There were two stages in the analysis of the data. In the first stage I conducted a simple content analysis of each essay, where the students' responses to questions b) - challenges- and d) - unanswered questions - were transcribed, categorized and tabulated according to themes which emerged from the data. I used a grounded theory approach, with themes emerging from the data. In this analysis the essay as a whole was analyzed, not just the sections dealing with ESL children. A summary of this analysis will be presented first in the "results" section below.

Results – General Reading

Results from reading the text as a non-critical reader, looking for themes, will be presented first.

No Challenges or Questions!

As noted above, these readings were deliberately chosen in order to encourage reflection on the experiences of teachers working in contexts and with learners that were outside the students' own (limited) experience. Therefore, it was surprising that, in answer to the question "What

ideas and issues in the readings challenged your beliefs about learning and teaching in language and literacy?” seven of the students indicated that they were not challenged at all. Of these seven, four did not address the question, either explicitly or implicitly, and three deliberately wrote that they were not challenged. Typical responses were “non[e] of them challenged my beliefs that I have established during my time at university and ones that I previously had” (Mc6) and “the readings fitted into the mould of what I expected really well” (G6).

In response to question d) “What unanswered questions do you still have about this topic?” it was striking that 16 of these 37 first year students (43%) had no questions. They either did not address the question (7 students), specifically stated that they had no unanswered questions about this topic (6 students), or wrote that they had no more questions because of the quality of the readings (4 students). For example, G5 wrote, “many unanswered questions may have arisen if I had not read ‘A Whole School Response’ as it is clearly set out and easily understood.”

Challenges and Questions About Oral Language

Several students had comments and questions that dealt with oral language topics other than ESL. A content analysis of the students’ responses revealed that the same themes recurred in “unanswered questions” and in “challenges to beliefs.” The results of this analysis will therefore be presented together. The themes were - dialects and varieties, oral language and its assessment, cultural diversity, and creative thinking.

Dialects and Varieties

The six students who had unanswered questions about dialects appeared to cling to a notion of correctness. Examples are - “How do we distinguish what is their dialect and what is incorrect speech?” (G4). “[Should we] try and correct dialects which contradict our grammatical rules?” (G3) “What do we do if children keep repeating these slang words in the classroom?” (M5)

Six of the students wrote about their surprise that what they had thought was “partly a form of slang that was meant to be the standard Australian English” (Mc5) was actually a dialect called “Aboriginal English.” They were surprised that dialects were actually a language variety, rather than just ‘bad English.’ B2 had never considered that a standard language was a social and political choice.

Oral Language

The six students who were challenged by the oral language readings were surprised at how important it is for students to have opportunities to talk. A typical comment was, “I always felt that the teacher talked and the students listened” (B6). They were also surprised that opportunities for pupils to use and develop their oral language had to be planned for.

The unanswered questions focussed more on pedagogy and assessment of speaking. For example, B5 wondered: “How do you get a shy or quiet student to participate in oral language activities in the classroom?”, while M2 asked, “How can a teacher effectively assess the linguistic and cognitive ability of each child in the classroom? Each child develops at a different pace and how can this be incorporated into assessment activities?”

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Cultural Diversity

The students who found something challenging in their readings tended to frame their responses in terms of what they *disagreed with* in the reading. Mc2, for example, proposed that providing a choice of topics to research or books to read would overcome both of the problems proposed in the McEvedy article – that is, that “a reading and researching project on iron ore or bauxite mining communicates different meanings ...,” and that “The strong story lines in [certain books] may be incomprehensible ...” This student did acknowledge, though, that “if children in the class have a different set of cultural experiences that make sense to them, but do not match those found in the school... then the ESL child’s ability to predict social outcomes is lost, their expectations are not met and story lines may not make sense.”

B8, on the other hand, was challenged by the statement in one article that “White teachers might regard Aboriginal children as lazy, uncooperative and shy” (Furniss & Poulton, 1991, pp. 19-20). B8 wrote, “I feel that this is a very racial point. Teachers should view all children as equal and have the potential to achieve and learn.”

The three questions about cultural diversity indicated either a broad, uncritical acceptance of what cultural diversity meant for a teacher, or else a lack of understanding of what was implied by the article. An example of the former is M4’s comment that “After reading the four topics, my views and values have been altered in a way that encourages me to be more considerate of children from different cultural backgrounds and give them as much extra help that is need [sic], even if it did mean in my own time.” In contrast, D6 seems to have misinterpreted the assertion that teaching is more effective if there is an absence of conflict between home and school, and that conflict can be avoided if the school develops an atmosphere in which every child’s mother tongue is respected (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm, 1982, p. 193). That student’s question was, “How, when there are so many languages and dialects spoken in Australia, are teachers expected to become familiar with the many idiosyncrasies in these hundreds of languages? There are only so many hours in a day!!”

Creative Thinking

Two students found the concepts presented in the Murray article to be challenging - that the only place indigenous children would hear English was the school, and that their teachers might lack the confidence in English to go beyond the textbook. Two had further questions about encouraging and developing creative thinking in their pupils. D3 was intrigued by “Smith’s idea whereby ‘to understand language and to teach it, we must understand the mind of the language learner’ (Smith, 1983, p. 52) ... Therefore, my question would be examining whether or not you can fully understand the mind of the language learner or not. Is it possible?”

Of the remaining questions, three were broadly about pedagogical strategies for ESL children, three had worries about how much time looking after an ESL child would take, and two used a “disability” frame of reference to ask about ESL learners. Examples were, “ how do you fit ten to fifteen minutes of time into your daily schedule to help one of your ESL students?” (Mc3). “I would like to know if there is a support group that helps teachers dealing with second language learners” (D1).

The students' writing about ESL learners will be discussed in detail in the critical discourse analysis which will be presented next.

Results – Critical Reading

The second stage of analysis involved a search of the whole data set for comments written by the students about ESL children. These comments were taken from any section of the essay in which they occurred. Most of the comments about ESL children were found in the “interesting issues” and “issues most valuable to me as a pre-service teacher” sections of the essays. In this second stage of the data analysis, a more critical discourse analytic approach was taken. As van Dijk (1993) notes, this involves “the more detailed, micro-level and expression forms of text and talk. Many of these are more or less automatized, less consciously controlled or not variable at all, as is the case for many properties of syntax, morphology or phonology” (p. 261). It is believed that through this more detailed analysis, “the more subtle and unintentional manifestations of dominance may be observed ... in intonation, lexical or syntactic style, rhetorical figures [and] local semantic structures” (p. 261).

The framework chosen for the critical analysis was that outlined by Huckin (1997). Huckin advises us to first approach the text(s) chosen for analysis as a general reader. Then he suggests that we look closely at the text, “starting with features associated with the text as a whole (genre, framing, visual aids, etc.) and then gradually narrowing down to sentence-level and word-level features” (p. 86).

Genre

The genre of the texts under analysis was set by the task, and could broadly be described as an expository text, thus giving the writer the chance to present her or his own point of view on the topics available.

Framing

Although a particular format was set for the essays, some students chose to diverge from that format, thus being able to present certain items before others. Huckin (1997) maintains that the initial items presented serve “to create a frame for the story” (p. 86). Framing will be explored via the features below. Which “frame” is foregrounded?

Omission

What is left out? What *could* the writer have written about, but chose not to? Out of 37 students, only 20 even mentioned the issue of ESL students, even though all were supposed to have read about it. It is as if such learners are invisible to the writers.

Presupposition

Implicit in the texts is the idea that teaching ESL children is *difficult* or a *problem*. The students imply that they are not reading and writing about them because they are interesting or a resource, but because they are a problem. Examples of this presupposition in the text are:

“ESL pupils need help [...] ESL children need a lot more assistance when learning the English language” (Mc2).

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“Teaching reading to ESL children is [particularly] difficult” (Mc3, Mc6).

“ESL children are ‘not born linguistically handicapped; nor are they deficient in intellectual abilities’ yet generally, these children will finish secondary school behind in the performance of their English speaking classmates” (Mc5).

“it is highly likely that we will have to deal with this issue in our classrooms” (G1).

“opened [my] eyes to some of the problems experienced by the children” (B2).

Topicalization

In examining topicalization, we examine the topics or subjects of sentences, to see which frame is being supported. “Certain pieces of information appear as grammatical subjects of the sentence and are thereby topicalized” (Huckin, 1997, p. 83). There are two dominant frames that seem to be used in the student teachers’ discourse – ESL children, and teachers (who need to teach them to read).

Agent-Patient Relations

The approach I adopted for defining and describing agency is taken from Huckin (1997), who describes it thus: “If someone is depicted as an agent, who is it? Who is doing what to whom? Many texts will describe things so that certain persons are consistently depicted as initiating actions (and thus exerting power) while others are depicted as being (often passive) recipients of those actions” (p. 83).

Applying this notion of agent-patient relations from Huckin to the student texts reveals a dominant pattern of ascribing agency, so that what *teachers* do is the sole preoccupation, and further that ESL children are *not* learning, and are a *problem* that the teacher has to *do* something about. Students are portrayed as passive. Is this the student teachers’ own perception of themselves? Do they therefore see the first language students as passive also?

Some examples from the texts are:

“teachers have to be sensitive to this” (Mc7).

“create an inclusive classroom for ESL learners” (G1).

“provide for the students and to make their learning as effective as possible” (D3).

“[article] gave many teaching strategies of how to deal with them (B2). (“them” = “ESL children” in this context).

“Teachers should make the effort to learn about the cultural backgrounds of their students, to create a class that values diversity and is one of inclusion” (M2).

There is one example where the agentless passive is used, but it is clear that the teacher would be the agent:

“I realize that all children no matter what their language background is – ESL or standard English – should all be given many and equal opportunities to be immersed in oral language, with opportunities to speak and also learn English” (Mc4).

Even when the students are influenced by the texts in relation to bilingualism and language use they still focus on teacher action rather than any agency that might be ascribed to the learner, as in: “Teachers should encourage their ESL students to use their mother tongue” (G1).

Lexical Choice

At the word/phrase level, we can examine the connotations of particular words, and the collocations found in the writing. I ranked the statements according to my subjective interpretation as to which were least or most negative in the following way. Terms such as “second language learners” were considered to name children in the most positive way. Technical terms, such as “ESL children” were considered neutral. I considered the use of “non” or “not” in the words used to name the children to be more negative, followed by distancing terms, and expressions which used a deficit view of ESL children.

Of course, a better way to rank the statements would be to ask ESL students themselves to rank them, and this would make an interesting future project. My ranking is found in Table 2 below. The numbers indicate the number of students who used the particular term:

Table 2: Naming ESL Children—From Positive to Negative Connotations

Children/students who have/with English as a second language	6
Second language learners	2
ESL student(s)	14
(1 “their” ESL students, 1 “your” ESL students)	
ESL children	8
Your ESL pupils	1
ESL background	1
ESL learners	2
Students from non-English speaking backgrounds	2
Non English speaking pupils (quoting from the article)	2
A student whose first language was not English	1
Children that are not picking up English	1
These children/students	2
Children like these	1
Them	1
Australian students who could not speak English	1
A student that barely spoke any English	1
A child who does not speak much, or any English	1
Students from a different country	1

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One of the most striking connotations was found in the following extract, which was the one that triggered my interest in conducting this project: “It has made me aware of the crucial role teachers have to play on [sic] allowing ESL students to reach the same level of understanding as their Australian classmates” (Mc1). I found the notion of ESL students not being Australian really confronting in this student’s writing, as was the notion that a teacher would “allow” a student to progress. A similar example, from a student who had read the same article, was: “I think this issue is really relevant when you are teaching students from a different country” (Mc3). Again we see from this writer the notion that ESL children are “from a different country,” not “Australian.” There was only one writer (M1) who wrote about “being in an Australian school filled with Australian students who could not speak English.” Another student wrote, “This would be done to value the students [sic] culture & heritage and to let them know that our language isn’t more superior than theirs” (G7). I note that for this writer, English is “our” language, and “they” have “theirs.”

Words which the students used when discussing what they read about ESL pupils were: “allowing,” “difficult,” “problem,” “deficit,” “difference,” “ESL/Australian,” and “assistance.” These words tend to portray ESL children as being a problem, perhaps not “Australian,” and needing teachers to do something about them. It should be noted, though, that many of the words come from the assigned readings, especially that by McEvedy (1986).

About themselves, the writers used words and phrases like “ignorance,” “naïveté,” “assumptions,” “did not know,” “did not think,” “had not thought,” and “had not witnessed.” Typical examples are:

“I didn’t realize how many things you had to consider to include second language learners” (D3).

“I have personally had very little exposure to ESL students throughout my school experiences, so most of what I’ve been learning is ‘theory yet to be exercised’” (D5).

“I had not thought about teaching students from a non-English speaking background and I’m thinking that it would be a difficult job” (D4).

“I felt that the entire article was of great relevance and dealt with issues that I had not yet witnessed – being in an Australian school filled with Australian students who could not speak English” (M1).

Also, from some of the writers, we see “worry” and “fear” accompanying the beginning of awareness of difference and diversity. An example is, “I am a little scared for myself knowing that one day I might be faced with teaching these students and not having the knowledge or know how to cater for their needs” (D2). D4’s comment above also displays worry. As noted above, patterns of intertextuality can be noticed between the student texts and the set readings, but space precludes discussion of this issue here.

It was clear from all the analyses that the readings were in urgent need of change, and several of them were replaced in the next year's set of readings. Gibbons and Dufficy and Gummer were retained, as students had reacted positively both in class and in their essays to their practical suggestions of positive, whole school responses to the challenges of having ESL children in mainstream classrooms. Students were also encouraged to enrol in the "ESL in the mainstream" elective that was offered in the fourth year of their program.

As noted in the earlier section on the setting and the data collection, before the reading reflections were turned in, the articles were used as a springboard for discussions in the tutorials. These usually took the form of "jigsaw" discussions, where "expert" groups who had all read the same article would decide on the main points of their article, then move into "jigsaw" groups, where each student had read a different article, in order for all to arrive at an understanding of the topic of the week. These discussions, and the later analysis of the reading reflections, also showed that some of the students were amenable to the arguments in the readings, and this shows the even greater importance of including an introduction to ESL issues, even in a location where multilingualism is not the norm.

Conclusions

The results show that the students were amenable to new ideas, but tended to construct and label learners in passive and deficit ways. Such findings resonate with those of colleagues researching in other contexts. For example, Skilton-Sylvester, investigating multilingual classrooms in the United States, concludes that there are "several key assumptions in the dominant discourse on the learning of English by linguistic minorities" (p. 9) which are:

1. A prevailing *language-as-problem* orientation is widespread and standard English is seen as the solution.
2. An emphasis on *subtractive bilingualism* is widespread in ideology and in policy.
3. Immigrant and refugee *rights to native languages* are questioned on the basis of their status as newcomers to the United States.
4. A narrow view of other languages exists that includes a belief that other languages are useful only if they serve a *pragmatic, instructional function*. (Skilton-Sylvester, 2003, p. 9)

These views, which were found in Skilton-Sylvester's search of the literature, were supported by her classroom data (with Khmer-English bilingual children). The idea of *language-as-problem* is the most closely aligned with my data.

The analysis of these reflections has led me to the worrying conclusion that a small amount of information, though provided with the best of intentions, may inadvertently reinforce previously held negative opinions about second language learners, as in the case of Mc8: "This series of readings didn't really alter my perceptions about language acquisition and development, but I think more importantly, cemented my existing perceptions."

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Alternatively, it may let students think that, having read only one article, they are now fully equipped to “deal with” any ESL pupils they may encounter in the future. “I feel I have a base to work from if I was ever to work in a school that had families that used English as a second language”, said G5. Also, like the teachers in Creese and Leung (2003), the students tended to focus on the *cultural* aspects of diversity, rather than the key *linguistic* ones. It should be noted that this was emphasized by several of the articles set for the task, so this is perhaps not so surprising.

A pattern of responses to particular articles has also emerged from the analysis of the texts. Those students who overall express the most positive attitude towards ESL children, and who feel they are equipped with some strategies to start helping them to learn English, are those who read the Gibbons article. Those who express their ideas about ESL children in terms of negatives or problems were those who read the articles by McEvedy and Murray. Fear and worry are expressed by those who read the Dufficey and Gummer article. Space prevents an analysis of the articles themselves, but it does show that we need to exercise caution in our choice of materials for our pre-service students to read. The choice of Gibbons (2002) as a text for our third-year students taking the TESOL elective was made before completing this discourse analysis, but our feelings about the suitability of this work have only been reinforced by the analysis.

I leave the final word to B7, the student whose attitude seems to be the most realistic, and the most potentially beneficial for any ESL children who may come into her or his care:

“There are many unanswered questions about E.S.L. students for me. I feel that this is a very important issue that requires the class teacher to develop new strategies if he/she is to be successful in helping the students to develop their understanding and use of the English language.”

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Appendix

Summaries of the Set Articles

Burke, D. (1993). Students from non-English speaking backgrounds – some factors influencing their school experiences and learning outcomes. In D. Burke (Ed.), *ESL in the Mainstream teacher development course. Participants' booklet for Introduction, Workshop 1, Workshop 2* (pp 26-30). Adelaide, SA: Department of Education.

This article notes that, while “each student is a unique individual” (p. 26), we need to consider the factors that affect them as a group. The author first discusses how the cultural “values, attitudes, experiences and expectations” (p. 26) of the students and their parents may differ from those of the school and suggests ways in which these may be accommodated.

“Language and learning are inextricably linked” (p. 27) and Burke notes how both first and second language competence are important and discusses some of the influences on these. Then she discusses the refugee/migrant experience, and encourages teachers to be mindful of what some of the students have been through before they arrive in our classrooms.

The article concludes with a discussion of children's past and present educational experiences, and how these may impact their learning in the mainstream classroom. There may be “gaps in conceptual knowledge and ... gaps in language skills” (p. 29), but a thread running through the article is that we need to have high expectations of ESL students, not to classify them as children with “learning difficulties.”

Dufficy, P. & Gummer, P. (1991). Literacy and second language learners. In E. Furniss & M.Green (Eds.), *The literacy agenda* (pp. 97-113). Melbourne: Eleanor Curtin.

This reading discusses how to organise for talk “where there are clues to meaning beyond the language itself” (p. 97), that is, context-embedded talk. The point is made that “teachers need to help students to talk like a written text” (pp. 98-99), one which does not rely on accompanying action. The focus in this section is on what teachers need to do.

The next section, “reading in the classroom,” is about how to use literature to enhance the following: “knowledge of content; vocabulary development; opportunities to listen; opportunities to read; and knowledge of text structure” (p. 101). The authors again advise moving from context-embedded to context-reduced talk around texts.

“Writing” follows next. It includes examples of second language learners' writing, and debates the efficacy of using process and genre approaches with second language learners. The authors advocate a more structured, content-focused, genre-based approach. They advocate a whole school approach which values the students' first language and culture.

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Gibbons, P. (1991). A whole school response. Chapter 10 of *Learning to learn in a second language* (pp. 110-119). Rozelle, NSW: Primary English Teachers' Association.

The message of this chapter, as the author notes in the first sentence, is: “no one teacher can answer all the language needs of bilingual children alone” (p. 110). The author believes that the ESL teacher should “link their planning and teaching to the regular class program” (p. 110) and suggests a number of ways of doing this, but notes that priority areas need to be identified.

She then suggests ways the community can be involved in the school, so that all children's languages can be valued. She suggests ways in which parents can be involved in the school.

Strategies for communicating information to parents are next suggested, involving both written and oral media, and including, where necessary, the use of interpreters and activities to explain current classroom practices.

The final section of the chapter provides a framework for evaluating the success of a “school's responses to cultural and linguistic diversity” (p. 115-6).

The article is overwhelmingly positive in its “take” on ESL children, and the author concludes with Wittgenstein's famous quote: “the limits of my language are the limits of my life.”

McEvedy, M. (1986). Some social, cultural and linguistic issues in teaching reading to children who speak English as a second language. *Australian Journal of Reading*, 9(3), 139-52.

This article commences with the words “teaching reading to ESL children is particularly difficult,” and continues to focus on what ESL children have problems with or need help with. For example, McEvedy notes that “children who speak ... ESL are not born linguistically handicapped ... but by the time [they] finish primary school, their scholastic performance in language subjects can be up to three years behind” (p. 139) and that “59% of ESL 10 year olds and 43% of ESL 14 year olds fail to achieve mastery in Reading” (p. 139).

The article deals with ESL children's “reduced chances of scholastic success” in terms of cognitive, sociocultural and linguistic factors. Cognitive schemata are discussed in relation to reading. Then the cultural interface is discussed in terms of how different languages encode personal relationships, etc. McEvedy notes that “the essential cultural problem for ESL children is that they come to school with a set of cultural experiences that make sense to them, but they do not match those found in the school” (p. 143).

McEvedy then continues to detail what ESL children might need help with in learning to read in English – which sounds, pronouns etc, will be difficult for the children. The article paints an overall deficit model of ESL instruction.

Murray, B. (1989). Talking when English is a foreign language. In J. Dwyer (Ed.), *A Sea of Talk* (pp. 57-66). Rozelle, NSW: Primary English Teachers' Association.

This short chapter tells the story of how, in the 1980's, Betty Murray developed a new English program for children attending schools in the Torres Strait Islands to the north of Australia, where the indigenous people are of Melanesian background and culture. For these children, Murray notes that "the *only* place in the community in which they may regularly hear and speak English is the school" (p. 57). The teachers also had limited competence in English, and were not comfortable going beyond the language of the textbooks.

The program Murray designed was based on two principles – involving children in the exploration of their world *in* English, using books as "the stimulus for these explorations and as the scaffolds for teachers' and students' language growth" (p. 59). A sample unit (on turtles) is provided to illustrate the principles and practice of the program.

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Teaching Grammar in the Foreign Language Classroom: Teacher Beliefs, Teacher Practices, and Current Research

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Introduction

There is a little story behind how I finally settled on this dissertation topic. A couple of years ago, I was at a presentation by Stephen Krashen, and I walked up to him with all my nerve and said, “I have a question about this dissertation proposal I’m working on.” He asked, “Well, what do you want to find out?” I replied, “What I want to find out is why language study is still not a very high priority in this country, even after 9-11. Why are the students and parents in my district still completely unconvinced of the need to know another language? Why is it that our enrollment in foreign language classes is just barely holding on in everything other than Spanish?” And he replied, “I’ll tell you why. Most of the teachers are still teaching like they did 50 years ago—grammar translation—and the kids hate it! There. I just saved you two years of research.” I was surprised by his response, but asked myself, are teachers really teaching like they did 50 years ago?

I certainly knew what Grammar-Translation looked like, having experienced it first-hand as a student, mixed with the Audio-Lingual Method. Looking back, I cannot say that I ever thought of my Spanish classes as “fun,” nor was I able to use the language communicatively upon completing the courses. It occurred to me that the one college Spanish course I enjoyed was one that focused on Spanish art, emphasizing reading about and writing about art in Spanish. All classroom interaction and work was in Spanish. It was essentially content-based instruction. The focus was on communicating meaning. Maybe there really *was* something to what Dr. Krashen had said. This made me wonder about my *own* teaching.

Since completing graduate work in second language acquisition and teaching methods, I had embraced the need for a communicative focus in the classroom, and the need for children to be purposefully and pleasantly engaged in language use. This led me to wonder what other language teachers were doing in their classrooms. Was it generally true that teachers in my school district still cling to an emphasis on explicit grammar teaching, or has language teaching actually changed? Thus, I moved away from the topic of public policy and perception, and moved into the classroom to conduct my research. Dr. Krashen’s reply led me to the topic that I ultimately investigated—the teaching of grammar in the foreign language classroom: teacher beliefs, teacher practices, and current research.

Background

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (2002) is widely referred to as *NCLB*, which has become a well-known acronym among public school teachers. It designates foreign languages as a core academic subject, which makes language teachers subject to the criteria for being “highly

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qualified,” not the least of which is that highly qualified teachers base their instructional strategies on “scientific research.” There was probably some sense of logic in the minds of its creators while drafting this legislation; it was apparently premised on the thinking that teacher training and professional development opportunities would give teachers knowledge of current research, which would, in turn, bring worthwhile change in teachers’ instructional practices. That is quite a long string of assumptions. Searching the literature, I came across several statements that suggested that there is a need for more research on whether they can really make all of those assumptions when it comes to the teaching of grammar.

Meanwhile, outside the walls of Congress, scholars in the field of second language acquisition are calling for a closer look at how teachers justify strategies they use in their classrooms. VanPatten suggests that “It is time to use what we know about second language acquisition to examine [teacher] beliefs” (2003, p. 99). The literature suggests that beliefs play a key role in determining teacher practices, and if a teacher’s beliefs about teaching grammar are very “traditional,” an observer might expect to see activities that are grammar-focused. This may occur even with teachers who think they are actually doing very “communicative” teaching. Musumeci remarks that “...more qualitative classroom-based research needs to be done to assess whether programs that purport to be ‘communicative’ according to the course syllabi and daily activities, actually engage students in meaningful language use” (1997, p. 125). Bailey and Nunan (1995) concur, advising that researchers need to listen to teachers’ voices if they are to understand classroom practice in the teaching of second languages. Finally, at a conference of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, Medley and Terry (2003) pointed out that just over 1% of all second language teachers report that they actually do research in their classrooms. The presenters asked two poignant questions: How are teachers getting informed about second-language acquisition theory? And, How do the teachers who are *not* at the conference become informed?

In the district where I conducted this study, there was a clear divide in beliefs and practices among the teachers. From personal conversation with long-time acquaintances, I was aware that there were at least a few teachers who taught from a heavily grammar-focused perspective. In contrast, as a Spanish Level-1 teacher, I have tried to emphasize an interactive use of language. My students are 13-year-olds. We still talk about the function of verb endings and we look at the patterns; but there is an emphasis on using language for a practical purpose. The priority is the communicating of meaning. I feel that my students have done pretty well if, by the end of the year, they can construct simple comprehensible sentences, can answer most questions they hear from me or other students, and can carry on a rudimentary conversation. They are decidedly novices. Often, on their first day of Spanish 2 at the high school, some of my former students come back to talk to me. A scenario from a couple of years ago went like this: “Guess what we did in Spanish 2 on the first day of class. The teacher gave us a list of verbs and asked us to conjugate them.” My reaction was, “Oh, *that’s* interesting.”

Keep in mind that the aforementioned conjugating activity was not for the purpose of placement. The students were in Spanish 2, and they were there to stay for the year. Most teachers would agree that there are probably better ways to get to know their students on the first day of class than to have them conjugate 50 verbs. So, regardless of the teacher’s reasons for the conjugating assignment, it prompted my former students to come back to me and tell me how stupid they

felt on the first day of class. Of course, they figured that everyone except them remembered all those forms. Traditional teaching approaches seemed to impact these students negatively in many regards.

By contrast, based on other conversations, I knew that there were a few teachers who were tenacious about using 100% target language in their instruction from day one, even in level one. Thus, our faculty seemed to include a wide range of views on language teaching, especially as it pertained to how grammar is acquired.

Research Questions

Although the research questions of my study were more numerous than those given here (See Appendix A), the focus for this paper will be the following: What are teachers' beliefs regarding teaching grammar? What are those beliefs based on, and how are those beliefs manifested in their classroom practices? As Pajares (1992) put it, this investigation was designed to clean up a "messy" construct, or as Eisenhart expressed it, to make a little more sense of the "muddle" (2001).

Method

The Research Site

The enquiry was conducted in a public school district located in a predominantly white middle-class suburb in southeast Michigan. There were three high schools and four middle schools in the district of over 16,000 students. Classes often were filled to the maximum of 35 students. Class periods were 55 minutes long. The tape recordings were made in the classrooms of the various teacher participants. Spradley's five criteria for making a site selection were helpful in choosing this research site (1980, pp. 45-52). The site offered the following qualities. First, *simplicity*: observing one element in language teaching in limited scope. Second, *accessability*: situations that I could enter easily. I already had an established rapport with most of the teachers in the district. Third, *unobtrusiveness*: the videotaping was the least invasive way of recording the teachers' practices; it was far superior to my own presence in the classroom, or that of a camera focused on the students. Fourth, *permissibleness* in that I was quickly granted permission for my study and had the support of the administration. Being an insider in the district opened doors to carry out this study. Fifth, *frequently recurring activities*: grammar lessons were common practice in language classrooms and, therefore, could be easily observed as they naturally occurred. As the study proceeded, it was clear that Spradley's criteria were an excellent set of guidelines in choosing a research site.

The Participants

There were 26 foreign language teachers in the district, all female, most having taught under ten years. Two of the district's language teachers are native speakers of the language they teach. The first step in gathering the data was to invite all of the district teachers to participate in the study. Three Spanish teachers volunteered to have their classes videotaped. Five other teachers, including a French and a German teacher, volunteered to be in the group interview.

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Data Collection and Analysis

The methodology included videotaped observations of the three teachers while they taught two lessons in which they modeled how they would present specific grammatical concepts. It is virtually impossible to know what teachers do in the classroom without observing them. According to Rokeach (as cited in Pajares, 1992), beliefs cannot be directly observed or measured, but must be inferred from what people say, intend, or do. For research, he added, “inferences must consider all the ways people ‘display’ their beliefs: (1) belief statements [interviews], (2) intentionality to behave in the predisposed manner [the teacher’s lesson plan and interview], and (3) behavior related to the belief in question [observation]” (p. 314-315). Observations were followed by individual interviews with the teachers in the videotapes. Next I conducted a focused group interview with the teachers who had not been taped, but wished to contribute through a group discussion; finally, based on the literature review and the data gained from the videotapes and interviews, I constructed a survey. (See Appendix B) Some of the questions are demographic questions such as, “How many different courses do you teach?” or “How many years have you taught?” There are also questions to ascertain how often teachers observe each other, how often they reflect on their teaching, and whether they attend conferences or read research articles. In general, I had hoped to explore the implications of their responses for the foreign language program in my district, as well as the implications for teacher education courses and their role in preparing “highly qualified” teachers.

The survey was electronically sent to all of the teachers as a link. By having an Internet site administer the survey, the teachers’ anonymity was preserved. The survey offered all of the district foreign language teachers an opportunity to participate in the study. Nineteen of the 26 ultimately completed the survey.

Trustworthiness of Findings

The Emic Perspective

One premise of this study is that a researcher can infer educational beliefs of teachers by analyzing their reported thoughts and their observed behaviors. Although behavior and speech may not be fool-proof in drawing inferences about beliefs, when “taken together they can lead to an adequate cultural description” (Spradley, 1980, p. 11). Inherent in this process is the dynamic of interpretation—by the informants, as well as by the researcher. One advantage in understanding the selected research setting of this study is the fact that the researcher is an insider in addition to being an observer. This “insider’s” perspective—the emic perspective—is highly useful to ethnographic research. This type of study requires the researcher to recognize and accept multiple realities (Fetterman, 1989). “Documenting multiple perspectives of reality in a given study is crucial to an understanding of why people think and act in the different ways they do” (p. 31). This perspective was essential to gathering rich data to describe the “culture” of teachers and to help in the design of the survey.

The Etic Perspective

Having collected the data up close and through the eyes of the participants, I then had to step back from the data in order to make sense of it and analyze it in a more objective way—the etic perspective. Even in stepping back, there is the unavoidable fact that I, as the researcher, bring my own perspective, my own interpretation of reality. Thus, the reality in my mind would inevitably color my interpretation of the observations and the interviewees' comments. The etic perspective recognizes the complexity of doing this type of research: the teachers have their interpretations of their classroom teaching and the forces influencing it, and the researcher places another layer of interpretation over the perceptions of the teachers.

To minimize the effect of researcher interpretation, and in order to preserve researcher neutrality, I kept a journal; collegial critiques and member checks with the stakeholders were also an integral part of the research process. In keeping a reflective journal, I was able to record my *own* reflections as the themes unfolded, documenting the effect of conducting this research on my own beliefs—my beliefs about grammar teaching and about conducting this research study. The journal proved to be of special importance in the findings.

The qualitative data underwent a taxonomic analysis. (See Appendix C.). Distinct themes (cultural domains) emerged, and analyzing the various elements within each thematic category yielded a taxonomy of factors. As Schensul, Schensul, and LeCompte (1999) explained, the survey is based on “items derived from the transformations of cultural domains to factors and then to variables in the local setting” (p. 167). With the survey data, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient drew attention to variables that appeared to be significantly correlated. Together, the qualitative analysis and the quantitative analysis triangulated with the current research to strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings.

Results and Discussion

Observation of Classroom Practices

The observation videotapes revealed teachers' beliefs about grammar teaching as manifested in four main practices: (1) explicit explanation of grammar rules, (2) teaching grammar in English, (3) drilling, and (4) error correction. The three teachers who were videotaped used numerous strategies in their grammar-focused lesson presentations. All the observed teachers began the lessons by connecting the new material with the students' prior learning via many examples. For instance, one teacher led students to see that they had used indirect object pronouns before, in their usage of *gustarse*, even though they had not labeled them as such. Another teacher recalled for students that they had used two of the possessive adjectives already, *mi* and *tu*, and that they now would be adding others.

In addition, teachers used common classroom phrases, such as “turn to page...” or “take out your notebook,” in the target language, they spoke more slowly than native-speaker pace, and they included many visuals with color enhancement to highlight grammatical elements. The taped lessons had other characteristics in common. Each teacher presented only a few new elements; for example, they did not present both new vocabulary *and* new grammar concepts at the same time.

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Furthermore, all the teachers showed sensitivity to students' anxiety by inviting questions and encouraging student comments: "Nothing you say is wrong at this point" or "I'm so glad you asked that question." All teachers personalized their lessons and changed the specific activity every 10 to 17 minutes. Teachers explained any grammatical elements that were not clear to students, and for the most part, this was done in English. One 30-minute lesson included a 17-minute English discussion of language comparisons. All of the taped lessons included numerous occasions for partner work which were designed to provide space for students both to figure out and to practice grammatical structures. In one lesson, a grammar chart engaged the students in practicing conjugating verbs. Teachers typically explained the purpose and usefulness of the day's lesson.

In a somewhat contrasting style, one of the teachers presented almost an entire level-one lesson in Spanish, with only a few asides in English. This teacher used a much slower pace than normal speech and repeated often to be understood. The teacher explained concepts in Spanish, but gave directions in English. Also, although the teacher taught the lesson primarily in the target language, it included a drill that could be characterized as "mechanical" (Brown, 2001); students looked at a worksheet on the overhead projector, filling in the correct form of a verb as indicated by the infinitive at the end of the sentence. Students could have chosen the correct form without actually comprehending the sentences: "*Yo _____ la computadora. (usar).*" The pair-work, however, was more contextualized and required understanding the meaning of the words to respond correctly.

All of the teachers wrote on the chalkboard or overhead transparency to visually organize the grammatical information—possessive adjectives, object pronouns, and verb forms—often with color-coded words or letters. One teacher also used an additional visual clue by gesturing "thumbs up" for positive statements and "thumbs down" for negative statements. In order to introduce syntax of object pronouns, two of the teachers did extensive modeling and students did numerous repetitions of question-and-answer structures. For example, one lesson required students to repeat a particular question nine times during the lesson: "*¿Barriste el piso?.. No, no lo barrí.*" (Did you sweep the floor? No, I didn't [sweep it].) The teacher explained that the repetition served to train the students' ears to Spanish syntax and rhythm because it was so different from English syntax and intonation. The teacher also had stuck a picture of a mother and a picture of her son on the chalkboard. She moved closer to the mother's picture when asking the question and stood by the boy's picture when stating the reply. Throughout her presentation she paid special attention to the function of words in the sentences she presented, labeling the "subject" as the "doer." The students, she explained, just seemed to "get it" when she called the subject the "doer."

Teachers also used repetition in the form of a chant for learning the present tense conjugation of *hacer* (to do or to make). This involved clapping and chanting, including the subject pronouns with the correct verb forms. The format of this drill departed from the textbook by stating the third-person forms *three* times, once for each possible subject pronoun: *yo hago, tú haces, él hace, ella hace, usted hace*, etc.

All the grammar lessons were presented in context, relating the structures and content to the students' lives. For example, one discussed chores the students had to do at home, another focused on preferences in current music performers, and yet another lesson related to discussing students' relatives.

I shall now summarize data from the survey, and consider in particular how it relates to the observational data.

On the survey, Question #13 rated the importance, or frequency of use, of fifteen instructional strategies. First, it appears that teachers were reluctant to label anything as "not important," thus, a "neutral" answer, in essence, was choosing *not* to label a strategy as important. (See Table 2.)

Explaining grammatical rules was first on the list and all 19 respondents rated it as important or very important. By contrast, conjugation charts and repetition drills were near the bottom of the list. Nonetheless, both the repetition drills and conjugation charts were considered important to approximately two out of three teachers, corroborating the qualitative findings.

Practices that are often deemed as essential to Communicative Language Teaching received mixed responses. Input of authentic language through listening and reading activities fell in the middle of the list with 21% and 26% respectively not marking them as "important." Teacher use of the target language (89% rating it important), specifically modified teacher language (95%), group work (95%) and speaking assessment (84%) indicate a priority placed on language and interaction in general. Thus, although target-language input through reading and listening activities received lesser emphasis, other interactive strategies were given greater importance.

How Teachers Justify Classroom Practices: The Role of Beliefs

During the interviews, the teachers expressed their beliefs about grammar teaching, justifying many of their practices based upon those beliefs. (See Table 1.) The data fell into four categories: (a) using English in explaining grammar rules, (b) repetition and drills, (c) error correction, and (d) beliefs about students.

Using the Target Language

Use of the target language in teaching foreign languages is key in Communicative Language Teaching. The rationale is that when teachers speak in the target language, they provide a primary source of input for the students. However, teachers in this district are not in agreement about whether its use must be exclusive. Use of the second language was prominent in all of the video tapes. All of the teachers who were videotaped expressed the need for their students to receive good L2 input, and indeed, modeled frequently for the class.

Besides the questions of teaching grammar directly and using all target language, there was a controversy about whether grammar ought to be taught in English, since virtually all of the students are native speakers of English. Two of the teachers that were videotaped used English in their discussions and explanations after having presented many examples in Spanish. The

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third teacher presented some simple points for review in Spanish and then proceeded to work through a conjugation assignment using Spanish. This teacher, however, made several asides to the students in English. This led me to ask the teachers, “Why do you think that you need to use English?” In three different interviews, the response was, “You can tell by the look on their faces.” Thus, in this regard, teachers did rely on student needs to prompt a strategy.

This issue is one that elicited strong feelings from the participants. One informant reported that she had to conduct her lessons completely in Spanish while doing student teaching. She thought that this was a horrible idea because “the kids just don’t get it”. This is the reason this teacher gave for using English for explaining many of the rules of grammar. Her comments echoed the words of another participant who said, “I would [explain] it in English. Otherwise they don’t get it.” One teacher who taped a lesson with a first-year Spanish class stated, “I explain in English because I want to be understood. They don’t have enough vocabulary if I were to explain in Spanish.” The interviews reveal strong beliefs about how students learn grammar and the importance of their understanding the grammar concepts. Many of the teachers seem to be saying that grammar is special content, that is, a uniquely challenging part of language learning.

In order to gain a broader understanding of the teachers at the site, I posed several questions on the survey addressing beliefs about grammar teaching. Question 21 inquired if teachers were comfortable with the idea of explaining grammar concepts to their students in English. Of the 19 participants, 84% strongly agreed with giving explanations in English if students did not seem to comprehend the rules; the other 16% somewhat agreed with the use of English for this purpose.

Repetition and Drills

Returning to Dr. Krashen’s statement, if teachers are still teaching like they did 50 years ago, are they essentially teaching in the same way that they themselves were taught? It was interesting to see that there is a relationship between these two variables among the teachers at this site, but it is a funny, tangled-up one; it turns out that, for example, one teacher would say, “I was taught with the Audiolingual Method—tapes, drilled to death; only to add, “I probably don’t do enough drilling because I just didn’t like it.” This not only implies that she does not teach as she was taught, but also that she somehow believes that she is not doing it the way it “should be done.” There was some little part of her that thought that all the drilling was part of a “good lesson.” This dynamic supports the findings of Bailey (cited by Freeman & Richards, 1996) and was part of several teachers’ comments. For example, one teacher said, “In my French class, we had to pick an article from a French magazine once a month and we had to recite it by memory to the teacher,” adding, “I could never do that with my students; they just wouldn’t memorize it.” Some teachers said that they were only able to speak in isolated, short sentences as a student in their high school classes, and, for that reason, they like to give their students an opportunity to speak a little more freely in a more unstructured way. These remarks suggest that teachers are affected by how they are taught, but it is not always a neat, positive correlation. Not only are their experiences as students a factor in this dynamic, but so are their student-teaching experiences.

Student Teaching and Methods Courses

The focus group interview led to a discussion of the teachers' student-teaching experiences and teaching methods courses. It should be pointed out here that some of the teachers in the district did not student-teach in a foreign language classroom, and they had not had a teaching methods course in this discipline. Among the teachers I interviewed, however, several had experienced a very rigorous student teaching/methods course combination at a local university. Quoting one of them, "We all had to tape ourselves and watch ourselves. We had to include lots of drilling, lots of repetition; all had to be scripted, rehearsed, and presented; our visuals had to be multicultural and it mattered how we held them up." One teacher remarked, "Oh, it did have a lasting effect on me. I live with guilt every day. What I learned is that it is absolutely unrealistic for me to be able to put together lessons that are that structured every day." Yet another teacher said, "I thought this was preparing me for the classroom, but when I got into the classroom, it was totally different." She explained that not only did she have to prepare three different plans each day (for her three different courses), but she also was expected to "cover" the sequence of grammatical concepts that constituted the syllabus. No longer were there two or three weeks to prepare a showcase lesson for her students.

How Errors Are Handled

Another classroom issue highlighted in the data was error correction and how the participants' own errors were corrected when they themselves were students. One participant said, "I really wanted to be corrected all the time. I wanted to know what my errors were." This teacher revealed her struggle with what she understood about current research on error correction when she said, "so it's a bit of a battle, not to correct people all of the time." By contrast, another teacher remarked, "I really didn't like being corrected and being singled out all of the time," and therefore, she did not do that in such a direct way in her classroom, but was selective about correcting student errors in grammar; instead, she often allowed students in groups to help each other in self-correcting.

Beliefs About Students

"*How I like to learn.*" Another notion that complicates the picture is the variable *how I like to learn*. During interviews, several of the teachers reported that the techniques they enjoyed and found helpful as students play a big role in their teaching today. The survey responses, however, did not support this; the *how I like to learn* variable was tied for fifth out of eight choices in response to "the two most important factors that determine what I typically do in the classroom." Indeed, Met (2005) advances an excellent analysis of why, perhaps, it would be best *not* to base our language teaching strategies on what worked for us.

Unfortunately, we language teachers are an anomalous population. Given the small numbers of American students who took a language at all in secondary school—no more than 40% in the last 30 years—, language teachers are a distinct minority, a very small pool of the general student population. That pool is even smaller considering how few secondary students took more than 2 or 3 years of a foreign language. The pool shrinks substantially when limited to those students

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who continued to study a foreign language intensively throughout their college years. Indeed, the pool is just a few mere droplets. Thus, for teachers to judge the efficacy of instructional practices from our own successful school experiences as language learners is naive. Perhaps language teachers should assume that whatever works for us as a unique subset of the total school population, does NOT work for most students. In order to reach the majority of students, most of whom are not at all like us—the successful language learner—it is important to expand instructional practices beyond what worked for us former language students/now teachers.(p. 45)

Whatever methods they are using, some teachers expressed the frustration that their students are not progressing as they would like. Perhaps in an effort to explain why some of their typical lessons are not meeting with the kind of success that the teachers would like, in the interviews several of them remarked that “students today are not like the students from ten years ago,” saying that the “caliber” of student has changed. At a departmental meeting some of the high school teachers expressed concerns that students are not “as prepared” for level 1 as they used to be when they arrived as freshmen at the high school. All of the observations mentioned above provide a good reason to re-examine who or what is driving the curriculum.

The Teacher’s Mind Set

There is a phenomenon that the participants called the “comfort zone.” Even trying to teach how the teacher herself likes to learn is sometimes difficult, requiring more time and effort to get prepared, and many teachers said it is very easy to “fall back into,” as they put it, some more traditional ways that often do not require as much planning. Thus, the study reconfirms that teachers’ experiences as language learners do inform their classroom instruction

To gain a better insight into the grammar-teaching mindset, I asked the teachers in the group interview, “What do you think about just before you have to teach a big grammar lesson?” (For example, the level-one teacher trying to teach how to conjugate, or teach subject-verb agreement... or the more advanced-level teaching of the dreaded subjunctive.) I also asked, “What’s on your mind as the students are entering the room?” One teacher responded without hesitation saying, “A happy day is a day when I can teach grammar. I love it. I love grammar!” This is an award-winning teacher who is well-liked by her students. She added later that her students want her to explain the rules. They even get impatient when she starts with contextualized examples and asks them to figure out the pattern. They say, “Can’t you just tell us the rule?” All the interviewed teachers said that they would never spend more than 10 to 15 minutes where they were the main speaker in the class, talking about grammatical items. Yet, looking at the classroom observation tapes, this estimate might be a bit low.

Learners’ Interests and Needs

The constructivist paradigm would suggest that “learners—what they want to learn and why they are taking the class” should be paramount in the teachers’ planning process (Fosnot, 1996; Long, 1983, 1997). The survey showed, however, that in response to the question on what two factors most determine their classroom instruction, “learners—what they want to learn

and why they are taking the class” came in dead last. This, of course, has major implications for the classroom. Even though it came up as a low priority on the survey, during several of the interviews, teachers said that they plan their lessons based on their students’ interests and needs. One teacher injected that she needed to capitalize on their interests, and added, “I don’t want them to fall asleep.” Another remarked, “I want them to see the value of getting this information.” Other encouraging news was that every videotaped lesson that I saw started with the recall of prior knowledge, was contextualized, focused on just a couple of points at a time, and was personalized—naming students in the exercises, for example; some even used chants and other strategies to address various learning styles and to keep the students engaged. Thinking back to the comments about the teacher methods courses, if a lesson is all scripted, how much room is there to adjust for the particular students in a given class?

Implications for Further Study

Although space does not allow for a more extended discussion here, there were four other areas of enquiry that this original study encompassed: reflecting on one’s teaching, observing teachers, attending conferences, and reading research. One element that was conspicuous in its absence was *reflection*. The literature extols the virtues of reflective teaching (Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Omaggio-Hadley, 2001), yet there was no mention by anyone about the role of reflection in their student teaching or their teaching methods course. Even so, much of the literature about teacher beliefs comes back to the discussion about the value of reflection. Richardson (1990, 2003) found that if a person does not write it down, the reflection fizzles out somewhere and it is no longer available to have any real impact on future instruction. Writing little notes on lesson plans is a good thing, certainly; but it is not a philosophical self-assessment about the effectiveness of our teaching. This is where my keeping a researcher journal while going through this process has had a dramatic effect on me as a teacher and as a researcher. Realizing the impact of my own reflection and the power of observing other teachers compelled me to include a survey question about classroom observations. As I had suspected, most of the participants rarely, if ever, reflect on their teaching or observe other teachers.

Teachers might, nevertheless, get teaching inspiration from other sources. A potential source is attending conferences and workshops. Some of the teachers discussed how they had attended teacher association conferences and come back with a few ideas, or even some inspiration. They would consider a conference to be worthwhile if they came away with even the tiniest concrete strategy that could be used in their classrooms in the next few days. That comment was said numerous times. Typically, however, teachers were not seeking out research per se, which brings us to the last issue—the reading of research articles. Comments included, “I don’t read research articles. I don’t think they have anything to do with what I do in my classroom.” One source of research, however, provided some of the teachers with a chance to “catch up.” Some said that they read the CLEAR newsletter, “but not full journal articles.” *CLEAR News* is a publication of the Center for Language Education And Research, a Title VI Center at Michigan State University, which informs teachers of on-going research projects and professional development with special emphasis on classroom application. Another commented, “I just read them when I take a class.”

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Lastly, one teacher said, “I do read them; but usually someone has to have pointed out something that would be good to read, or perhaps I’d hear about an article or a study at a conference.” Indeed, the variable *reads research articles* showed a significant positive correlation with *conference attendance* and *level of education* ($p.05$). (See Table 3.) No one is suggesting that we should all teach the same “right” way. This study aimed at *describing* the teachers at the research site rather than prescribing how they should teach. Most interestingly, the data showed *no* significant correlation between *reads research articles* and any of the teacher practices or teacher belief variables. Cumming (1989) explained it well. Teachers’ practical knowledge and unique experiences “tend to have personal significance to the teacher, which differs from prescribed models of educational theory” (p. 47).

Conclusion

At the research site, grammar is being taught as *content*—content that needs to be “covered.” In this way, teachers’ fundamental assumptions that grammar should be taught explicitly and that curricula should be organized around grammatical points are not much different than they were 50 years ago. How grammar is presented is tied to teachers’ experiences in language learning, and to their beliefs about how languages are learned. The writers of *No Child Left Behind* can exhale; although research per se was not mentioned by teachers, they were doing many things that are supported by second language acquisition research, arriving at solid strategies based on individual experience and “intuition.” I am certain that continued analysis and continued reflection will clarify these findings even further. Whether or not a teacher can point to a specific piece of scientific research to justify a strategy, peer observation and self-reflection are processes that are widely supported by the research as genuine approaches to teacher development. Perhaps through reflection and observation, along with knowledge of current language acquisition research, teachers can arrive at an even clearer connection between their grammar teaching and current language learning research.

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Appendix A

Complete List of Research Questions for the Original Study

Research on Teaching Grammar

What does second language acquisition research say about the role of grammar teaching in the communicative foreign language classroom? Should it be taught directly? Should it be taught in isolation? Should it be taught in context? How should students' grammar mistakes be handled?

Teacher Beliefs, Practices, and Reflection

What do teachers *do* in their classrooms in an effort to teach grammar to their foreign language students, and what do teachers *believe* to be true about the teaching of grammar in the classroom setting? What is the importance of teacher beliefs? Can reflection on their classroom practices raise teacher awareness of their own beliefs?

Research-based Teaching

What role does *research* play in the shaping of teacher practices? Can research change teacher beliefs? What factors are the best predictors of a teacher implementing research-based instruction? If teachers do not get their ideas from research, where do their ideas come from?

Appendix B

Survey Questions

1. Which one of these best describes your present foreign language teaching assignment?
 - ☐ High School Spanish
 - ☐ High School French
 - ☐ High School German
 - ☐ High School French and Spanish
 - ☐ Middle School French
 - ☐ Middle School Spanish
 - ☐ Middle School French and Spanish
 - ☐ Japanese

2. What level of foreign language courses do you presently teach? Mark only ONE answer.
 - ☐ Level 1
 - ☐ Level 2
 - ☐ Level 3
 - ☐ Level 4
 - ☐ Mostly levels 1 and 2
 - ☐ Mostly upper levels
 - ☐ A combination that includes upper and lower levels.

3. Indicate your most advanced preparation in the language you **primarily** teach in your school:
 - ☐ I have a major in the language
 - ☐ I have a minor in the language
 - ☐ I have an advanced degree in the language
 - ☐ I am a native speaker of the language I teach.

4. How many years have you been teaching a second/foreign language?
- ☐ 0-4 years
 - ☐ 5-9 years
 - ☐ 10 – 14 years
 - ☐ 15 – 19 years
 - ☐ 20 – 24 years
 - ☐ 25 – 29 years
 - ☐ 30 years or more
5. Part of your language teaching background includes some sort of study abroad.
- ☐ yes
 - ☐ no
6. Part of your language teaching background includes some travel abroad.
- ☐ yes
 - ☐ no
7. Do you ever feel guilty that you are not teaching as well as you could?
- ☐ yes
 - ☐ no
8. How many preps to you have this semester, including non-FL classes?
- ☐ 1
 - ☐ 2
 - ☐ 3
 - ☐ 4
 - ☐ 5
9. Please estimate the percentage of classroom materials that you make yourself.
- ☐ 0 %
 - ☐ Approx. 25%
 - ☐ Approx. 50%
 - ☐ Approx. 75 %
 - ☐ Virtually all my instructional materials are self-constructed.

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10. How often do you reflect on your lessons and take the time to write down your thoughts?

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ About once a week
- ☐ Very infrequently
- ☐ I reflect, but rarely or never write things down
- ☐ There's not enough time to reflect

11. When was the last time that you observed another FL teacher conducting a lesson, either on tape or in person? [Don't count observations of student teachers]. Please mark the most accurate response, only ONE.

- ☐ During the past 6 months
- ☐ During the previous school year
- ☐ Over 2 years ago
- ☐ Never

12. Please estimate how much time it would take you to plan a 50-minute lesson on an important grammar concept [e.g., introducing conjugating, uses of the subjunctive, noun/adj agreement]—a lesson that you would feel confident in demonstrating for fellow teachers. (include in your estimate the preparation of visuals and handouts)

- ☐ 15 minutes
- ☐ 30 minutes
- ☐ 45 minutes
- ☐ 1 hour
- ☐ 1 ½ hours
- ☐ 2 hours or more

13. **Rate** these aspects of your foreign language teaching according to the importance you place on them in your classroom, measuring their importance by how often you do them.

(1= very important, 2= important, 3= neutral, 4= not very important, 5= not important
[do them almost daily] [rarely do them]

- ___ doing pair/group work
- ___ reading in the target language
- ___ performing scripted conversations
- ___ assessing speaking skill
- ___ doing workbook exercises on grammatical points
- ___ writing in the target language
- ___ explaining grammatical rules
- ___ using songs or chants to practice grammar points
- ___ using the target language (myself) in class
- ___ conjugating verbs on charts
- ___ listening to audio tapes or viewing video tapes of authentic language
- ___ modifying my own speech in the target language (e.g., slower pace than normal)
- ___ doing projects that require the use of the language to successfully complete them
- ___ giving quizzes and tests that focus on grammatical points
- ___ repetition drills

14. The two most important factors that determine what I typically *do* in my classroom are:
(select only TWO)

- ___ the district curriculum guide and/or national standards
- ___ the syllabus of the textbook—the sequence that is presented there
- ___ the students: what they want to learn or why they are taking the class
- ___ the things that I think helped *me* learn the language
- ___ the research that I've read on learning and teaching
- ___ collaboration with other teachers
- ___ the things I have learned in workshops or professional development
- ___ my university teacher-preparation courses

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15. My student teaching experience prepared me well for teaching in my own classroom.

_____ yes

_____ no

_____ I did not student teach in the foreign language area

16. During the last two years, how many research articles/books about language teaching have you read?

_____ 0

_____ 1

_____ 2

_____ 3

_____ 4

_____ 5 or more

17. During the past five years, how many MFLA conferences have you attended?

_____ 0

_____ 1

_____ 2

_____ 3

_____ 4

_____ 5

18. During the past five years, how many Central States, ACTFL, or other conferences or workshops pertaining to language have you attended?

_____ 0

_____ 1

_____ 2

_____ 3

_____ 4

_____ 5

_____ More than 5

19. In general, I find research in the language teaching field to be (check all which apply):

- ☐ boring
- ☐ difficult to understand
- ☐ easy to understand
- ☐ interesting
- ☐ pointless
- ☐ too technical/theoretical
- ☐ about the right mix of theory and practice
- ☐ useful

20. Do you believe that, through formal classroom instruction, a second language can be acquired without teaching grammar directly (e.g., explaining the rules)

- ☐ Yes.
- ☐ Not quite. There are a few rules that I think must be taught or they won't be learned.
- ☐ No. I almost always explain the rules.
- ☐ I'm not sure.

21. Indicate your belief: I am comfortable with the idea of explaining a grammar concept to my students in English if they seem not to "get it."

- ☐ 1 – strongly agree
- ☐ 2 – somewhat agree
- ☐ 3 – neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ 4 – somewhat disagree
- ☐ 5 – strongly disagree

22. I believe that rote, mechanical drills and repetition are necessary and/or helpful to support language acquisition.

- ☐ yes
- ☐ no
- ☐ not sure

23. When students work in groups, I am afraid that they'll pick up errors from each other.

- ☐ yes
- ☐ no

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24. I believe that most of the errors that my students make are caused by interference from their first language.

_____ yes

_____ no

Comments:

If you want to qualify an answer you gave, or you would simply like to comment, please do so. Your insights can help us all.

Appendix C

Taxonomic Analysis: ABOUT TEACHING GRAMMAR

Cultural Domains

What Teachers BELIEVE About Teaching Grammar

Meaning is important.

- It helps internalize.
- It helps retention.
- It makes it interesting.

Lesson needs adjusting as we teach.

Teachers should notice student reactions.

Repetition helps.

Heavy drilling is a waste of time.

Drilling doesn't help pronunciation.

We need to explain the rules in English.

- Students want explanation.
- This really helps students.

I can repeat “possessive adjective” all day, and they may not remember it tomorrow.

Students at level 5 really want to know the rule.

If it's not explained really well at first, they'll be discouraged.

I can't teach grammar all inductively.

I think the students might need to do more drilling.

It's not reliable to teach grammar cross-linguistically because the kids don't know enough about English grammar to make a useful comparison.

What Teachers DO While Teaching Grammar

Lower student anxiety

- invite questions
- honor all guesses
- call on prior knowledge
- use visuals
- explain most rules explicitly
- explain most rules in English
- teacher enunciates slowly
- have students practice in pairs
- very selective about making corrections

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Use grammatical labels

- masculine
- feminine
- subject
- verb
- direct object pronoun
- subject pronoun
- possessive pronoun

Compare to English language grammar

Have students take notes

Introduce a few points at a time

Model syntax and pronunciation

Gesture to complement vocabulary

Conduct repetition drills

- choral
- partial class
- student chants

Use self-constructed materials

- conjugations of verb forms
- visual word strips
- highlight or color code forms

Present grammar in context of a message

- doing chores
- talking about family
- talk about what students like

What Teachers SAY About How They Teach Grammar

I bring it in without them knowing it.

I can't afford any more drops.

I would explain it in English, yes.

I put everything in writing (visuals).

Sometimes I use a Gouin Series.

I try to show all the forms in a context, maybe highlighting the form.

I have students look through a chapter dialogue to find the patterns.

In level 4, I have to make all my own examples.
 I drill my level ones every day, because they won't do it at home.
 On visuals I put "de ella" and "su" side by side.
 They don't have enough vocabulary.
 I tried to explain it in Spanish.
 I use choral drills to involve the kids as much as possible.
 I learned the chant at a conference.
 First I put all the verb forms in order; then I mix them up so they'll know them randomly.

What Teachers Believe About ERROR CORRECTION

I don't want them to feel hurt.
 It is intimidating to correct them frequently.
 I want them to feel comfortable about speaking.
 I always wanted to know if I was making errors, so it's hard to hold back from correcting them.
 I think some appreciate the correction.
 I will usually correct by recasting their statement with a correction.
 I try to pick out what they do right, instead of always what they do wrong (as result of conferences).

HOW Teachers Correct Student ERRORS

Repeat something correctly
 Say, "Very good, I understand. In French, we say ..."
 Say, "How about could you change the ending?" or "Ok, can someone help him out?"
 Use a variety of techniques
 Give students a chance to correct own errors
 Give them a set of statements with errors from a quiz; have them correct them in groups

What Teachers Did in Class AS LANGUAGE STUDENTS

Listened to tapes
 Went to language lab
 Memorized magazine articles in French
 Recited long passages by memory
 Taped ourselves
 Reported on countries
 Went on field trips
 Had to speak in class

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What Teachers Say About Their OWN EXPERIENCE As Students

Memorizing magazine articles was stressful.

Listening to tapes and repeating, boring and not very helpful.

It was old-time schooling, archaic methods.

We were not really prepared (to be fluent).

Didn't like being corrected constantly.

Didn't like being singled out and corrected.

What Teachers Did in Their METHODS COURSE

Lots of drilling

Videotaped ourselves

Viewed ourselves on tape

"Drill and kill"

Everything was planned (scripted) and rehearsed

Presented several lessons to the class

Other students and teacher "tore apart" our lesson presentation

We observed all the other students present

What Teachers Said About Their METHODS COURSE Didn't Really Prepare Me

I saw many other people teach.

I learned from the feedback from others.

I felt guilty. I don't have time to prepare lessons like those.

My [methods] course was too demanding. I got mono the next semester.

The expectations were unrealistic.

What Teachers Said About STUDENT TEACHING

My cooperating teacher was into old method and wouldn't let me try anything new.

I didn't get a chance to practice what I'd learned.

You start adapting from the "ideals" you learned in methods class.

I liked how my cooperating teacher allowed time for students to just chat in French every Friday.

I noticed my students relaxing right away.

I didn't agree with the usefulness of having to present lessons almost exclusively in the target language, which was required by my methods teacher.

What Teachers LIKE About Language-teaching CONFERENCES

I liked the shared energy.

I liked finding new strategies and techniques.

I would like to get ready-to-use activities.

I like the booklets and the handouts of some of the presenters.

Sometimes I am steered to new research.

I like buying good books or materials for the classroom.

What Teachers DISLIKE About Language-teaching CONFERENCES

There is never enough room in the sessions—have to stand up.

There are rarely enough handouts at the presentations.

There is no time to plan for implementing new ideas once back from conference.

There are usually very few German presentations.

The printed programs are misleading at times.

Sometimes I come away with little new information.

Conference sessions don't have much impact on my teaching.

How Teachers Feel About Reading Research

I go to conferences to catch up on research.

I don't get a journal; I don't know if there is one.

I read the CLEAR newsletter faithfully.

I rarely seek out journal articles even though they are sometimes interesting.

I read articles when I take a grad class.

I don't think they have much to do with my classroom teaching.

I'd probably read more articles if someone put a binder of good articles in the lounge.

What Teachers Say About REFLECTING

I will sometimes make a little note on a lesson plan, but that's all.

I just don't have time.

I don't usually reflect.

That's when block-scheduling would be nice.

I make little notes on lessons, otherwise I would forget.

I reflect about 20 minutes per day.

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Appendix D

Tables

Table 1: Correlations of Selected Belief Statements with Classroom Practice Priorities

Reported beliefs Practice variables	Rule	Drilling helps acquisition of grammar	Students learn errors in group work	Should explain rules in English
Assign grammar workbook exercises	Pearson Correla.			
		-.067	-.106	-.122
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.785	.667	.620
				.102
Give grammar quizzes	Pearson Correla.	** -.748	.171	.241
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.483	.320
				.724
Explain rules of grammar	Pearson Correla.	-.110	-.233	-.394
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.654	.337	.095
Use drills/ repetition	Pearson Correla.	.165	* .512	.190
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.501	.025	.437
				.848
Do pair work	Pearson Correla.	.235	-.007	-.150
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.333	.997	.541
				.199
Chart verb conjugation	Pearson Correla.	-.107	.446	.194
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.663	.056	.427
				.860
Use target language	Pearson Correla.	.321	.111	.060
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.180	.651	.806
				.271
				.263

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

N = 1

Table 2: Classroom Strategies—Importance Based on Frequency of Use (N =19)

Classroom Strategy	Important/Very Important	Neutral/Not Important
Explaining grammar rules	100%	0%
Doing grammar workbook exercises	95%	5%
Doing pair/group work	95%	5%
Teacher using target language	89%	11%
Students writing in target language	89%	11%
Assessing speaking skills	84%	16%
Listening activities using audio/video tapes	79%	21%
Performing scripted conversations	74%	26%
Giving quizzes focused on grammar points	74%	26%
Reading in the target language	74%	26%
Repetition drills	68%	32%
Doing projects that require use of language to complete	68%	32%
Using songs/chants to practice grammar element	58%	42%

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Table 3: Reading Research Articles

		Attends national and regional language conferences	Level of education
Reads research articles	Pearson	** .607	* .465
Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.045

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

N = 19

Relieving the Atlas Complex of Japanese Language Instructors Through Implementation of CBI

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In many traditional college-level Japanese language programs, the instructor tends to be an authoritative figure and the expert in the classroom who transmits his or her knowledge to the students, and as a consequence, students are treated simply as the passive recipients of that knowledge. As a result of this type of learning environment, students rarely become either competent users of the target language or critical thinkers. As a solution to this dilemma, we propose that Japanese language courses implement Content-Based Instruction (CBI). Furthermore, we propose that the target culture (Japanese culture in our case) comprise the content of the Content-Based Instruction. When CBI is successfully implemented, students are able to actively participate in their learning process with the instructor being the facilitator, rather than the sole transmitter of knowledge. A primary aim of CBI is for the students to become culturally literate users of the language. We provide a more detailed description of CBI below.

This paper is organized in the following manner. First, we discuss the dynamics currently observed in Japanese language classrooms, namely the so-called “Atlas Complex,” a burden the instructor carries, and its negative effects. Next, we propose Content-Based Instruction with a focus on culture as the solution to relieve the Atlas Complex. Then, we present two case studies of teachers implementing CBI, followed by their findings and discussion.

The Atlas Complex

Instructors with the traditional mindset often feel responsible for anything and everything that happens in the classroom. This is the classroom dynamic termed the “Atlas Complex” by Lee and Van Patten (2003). The instructor shoulders the entire responsibility for students’ learning, just as the mythical Atlas shoulders the world. Further, teachers who labor under the Atlas Complex tend to be over-protective of their students. Thus, for example, they repeat their questions too often and sometimes finish sentences for students (Lee & Van Patten, 2003), underestimating student competence. This dynamic is frequently observed in Japanese language classrooms at the college level. As a result, students are not engaged in true communicative activities nor are they provided with challenging tasks or opportunities to practice critical thinking skills.

A majority of the Japanese instructors that we have either worked with or observed are without a question competent instructors in terms of presenting the knowledge they possess to their students. They spend a large amount of class time explaining grammar explicitly, with the assumption that students will learn well from the explanations that the instructors provide. These instructors tend to believe that when they improve their explanations, student acquisition increases. Perhaps they feel that grammar is something tangible, so they feel that they cannot be

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doing the job properly unless they provide thorough explanations. In fact, many instructors of Japanese seem to prefer textbooks that are organized by morphological or grammatical items, rather than those organized by themes and topics. These books contain mechanical drills and superficial tasks to practice the target grammatical items. Students learning in this context are led to believe that learning morphology or grammar is equivalent to learning a foreign language, thus limiting the scope of their language learning experiences. In fact, a questionnaire study (Hayashi, 2004) reveals that more than 50 percent of Japanese learners acknowledge that learning a foreign language implies primarily learning a lot of grammatical rules and vocabulary. Surprisingly, that is the same response given by students fifteen years ago to the same questionnaire, despite the fact that foreign language teaching approaches in general have changed considerably over the same period. However, existing research shows that students do not learn much from an explicit explanation, nor do they leave their classes knowing as much as we teach or knowing the entire content of the textbook (Lee & VanPatten, 1995).

Within the framework of the “Atlas Complex,” some instructors even attempt to control what students utter, instead of letting them freely convey messages they want to communicate. In fact, quite a few instructors have commented that they feel uncomfortable giving students true communicative activities since they cannot predict where the conversation will go (Hayashi, 2004). They are worried that the class will spin “out of control” if students express what they want to say instead of practicing target morphology and new vocabulary. True acquisition could not be happening in that type of Japanese class, as acquisition occurs primarily when learners are engaged in true communicative activities (Lee & VanPatten, 1995; VanPatten, 2002).

In addition, instructors who labor under the Atlas Complex tend to tell their students what to say and often finish sentences for them. Some instructors commented that they feel bad when their students cannot respond to questions, and that they are not comfortable with silence in class (Hayashi, 2004). Even dedicated and caring instructors can make such choices in the classroom. They may simply want to prevent students from being discouraged or hurt because they care about their students tremendously.

We believe, however, that silence can be a valuable moment when acquisition is taking place and that the class is for the students to learn, rather than for the instructor to teach according to the lesson plan. Students need to be encouraged to communicate the message they want to communicate and figure things out for themselves in order to acquire the language. This naturally involves a radical shift in the teacher’s role and approach. The teacher must learn to be comfortable at the sideline at times in order to create space for students’ voices and offer them opportunities to work things out on their own.

When the instructor assumes the entire responsibility for learning, students do not have an opportunity to think for themselves. In fact, educators and the public at large have expressed concern about the insufficient development of students’ critical thinking skills. While instructors blame students for this phenomenon, the blame cannot lie solely with students, especially if the students are not receiving appropriate training to become critical thinkers in the traditional learning environment described above. Schultz (2001) suggests that a foreign language class

can be a perfect environment for students to develop critical thinking skills; especially when the instructor creates regular opportunities for such learning. For instance, students naturally bring certain assumptions about the target culture to the classroom and, through learning about the target culture, students have the opportunity to verify or question their previous assumptions.

In addition, students can compare and contrast the target culture to their own. They can also have opportunities to develop interpretive skills—not only to understand what is said or written, but to understand the speaker's or the writer's intentions through analysis of how something is expressed and what is implied by utterances. Such a rigorous and mindful development of cultural competency facilitates students becoming culturally literate users of the language.

Content-Based Instruction With an Emphasis on Culture

As mentioned above, we would like to suggest that Japanese language courses implement Content-Based Instruction (CBI) so that students will be able to convey messages they want to communicate and figure things out for themselves in order to acquire the language. With CBI the curriculum is organized such that one can integrate a particular content with language-teaching aims (Brinton et al., 1989). The content can range from an academic subject to a particular theme around which the lesson is built. For example, in our case, the ultimate goal of the CBI course was for students to gain an understanding of Japanese culture and society. Japanese language was no longer at the center of our learning objectives; although critical for achieving our course goals, language was the medium through which students discussed issues and exchanged thoughts and ideas. As learners successfully use the language to understand and master new information and ideas, they are expected to increase their proficiency in the language. One advantage of CBI is that it offers rich foreign language input in relevant contexts. Proponents also suggest that CBI increases student motivation when the content is relevant to the students.

With this approach, we have found that students are eager to learn the target culture and language. We feel that it is crucial to understand the culture along with the language in order to communicate effectively. Language courses tend to treat language as discrete from culture, or culture as something added on top of the language. In fact, the field of foreign language education has been criticized for not emphasizing culture enough (Kramsch, 1998; Byram, 1995). Language is profoundly a cultural and social behavior, with all of the implied complexity and richness. Yet many language instructors in the United States, according to Kramsch (1993), treat cultural competence as little more than acquisition of facts about the foreign culture. As Kramsch (1998) demonstrates, today's multilingual and multicultural world calls for a new kind of competence: “intercultural competence” or “intercultural communicative competence” (Byram, 1997).

College students are intelligent individuals who are eager to learn a target language and culture, and who are capable of being engaged in intellectually challenging tasks. We would be remiss not to encourage students to become actively involved in their learning processes. As educators, we feel it is our obligation to provide students with an intellectually stimulating learning environment in which they can gain intercultural communicative competence.

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CBI facilitates a shift in instructor and student roles; instructors abandon the authority figure role to become the resource person and architect who designs and plans. Through CBI instructors are not solely responsible for the final product. That is to say, when the instructor takes on the role of architect, the students assume the roles of builders or coworkers who collaborate in the learning process. When the focus is on language, the instructor tends to be the center of the instruction because he/she is the expert in the field; but when the focus is on content, a more collaborative learning environment will naturally be created, and students can contribute to their own learning.

As our case studies below illustrate, CBI can be a vital vehicle for discussing culture in the Japanese classroom, and allowing instructors to leave the Atlas Complex behind. The instructor is positioned as a facilitator and/or informant from the target culture, rather than merely as a disseminator of cultural facts. Students are then encouraged to discuss and interpret the cultural/linguistic contours. This shift is extremely important for the Japanese classroom because: (1) all cultures are multi-faceted and context-sensitive; (2) being a (former) member of the target culture does not automatically qualify the teacher as a definitive interpreter of the culture; (3) knowledge or expertise is socially constructed (Vygotsky, 1978) and therefore participatory; and, most importantly, (4) the classroom is first and foremost an “intercultural context” where the students and instructor rehearse how to interact with each other through authentic materials both in spoken and written forms. Through our approach of choosing culture as the content of CBI, students not only learn how to use language effectively and appropriately, but they also learn to see how “others” of the target language and culture observe and interact with the world. In this way, they are able to reflect upon themselves and their own language and culture. They also learn to contextualize themselves, as they become more aware of how their world is socially and culturally constructed, and they come to understand more deeply the similarities and differences between a language and its culture.

In our experience, carefully implemented CBI allows students to become active participants in their own learning process, rather than remaining the passive recipients of the instructor’s knowledge. Through discussion, students analyze, hypothesize, and evaluate the target culture, as well as compare and contrast it with their own. Thus, they are learning the culture, acquiring the language, and practicing critical thinking simultaneously. We believe that this is the most efficient way to become a culturally literate user of a language.

The two case studies described below demonstrate that students can be actively involved in their learning process by thinking, analyzing, and seeking information themselves. These studies were conducted in intermediate-level Japanese language courses in four-year state universities in the United States. The CBI technique was conducted for one academic quarter after students had studied basic sentence structures. In both classes, students learned the content of Japanese culture through comparing, contrasting, analyzing, and evaluating. The students also conducted their own research and presented their results to the class. Volunteer case study students were interviewed on their reactions to the CBI course. The first case study we also asked students precise questions about their thoughts on the instructors’ roles. The results demonstrate that

students can be involved in their own educational activities and that they can communicate their thoughts and ideas among themselves in the target language. This is best achieved when teachers keep to the sidelines, acting rather as facilitators.

Case Study I

Method

The first CBI case study was conducted in two second-year Japanese language classes at a four-year state university, using the textbook *Let's Think about Japan* (Morioka, 2003). The content of the textbook includes: (1) Education, (2) Becoming a Member of Society, (3) Marriage, (4) Family, (5) Leisure Activities, and (6) Religions and Belief. Each unit began with a reading that introduced facts about Japanese people and society. Students were then required to analyze causes and effects of those phenomena, and compare and contrast Japanese culture to their own cultures through discussion. They also were assigned to do research and analyze critically why a majority of Japanese people think in certain ways. In addition, they discussed problems prevalent in Japanese society and developed suggestions for improvement. After learning about Japan, they finished the quarter by reflecting on their own cultures and completing a project entitled, "Let's Think about America."

Among the 31 students who took the course, 3 volunteer students were interviewed in anonymity by a colleague researcher on their thoughts and feelings about the curriculum. Each interview was recorded and transcribed later by the interviewer. The interviewer asked questions concerning the textbook, instructors, and peers, addressing the following questions:

1. What did students think about the new content-based textbook compared to the traditional textbook they had used up until the previous academic quarter?
2. What did students think about the roles of the two instructors (the classes were taught by one lecturer plus one graduate student as a teaching assistant)?
3. What were the sources for their learning? Were they learning from their peers?

Findings

The interviews revealed several interesting facts. One student preferred the traditional textbook, while the other two preferred the content-based textbook. However, all of them said that they would choose the traditional textbook for independent language study. None of them considered the instructors as authoritarian figures, but rather persons to whom they could turn for assistance. The most interesting comment was about the teaching assistant, who was a graduate student majoring in Japanese literature. Let's call the teaching assistant "Ms. Smith." She was a non-native speaker of Japanese, and her oral proficiency level is roughly Advanced-low in the ACTFL OPI scale. The following is the student's comment:

Sometimes Ms. Smith is not so good at answering questions, but it is good that we can discuss among us students . . . and we help each other, and then when Morioka-sensee is there, we can ask for clarification. She clarifies very well. Ms. Smith's knowledge is much greater than ours, it's just not as much as Morioka-

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sensee's. But I never thought that was a problem; I thought that was cool. We can ask questions, and then it will formulate a discussion between all of us, so we kind of have to solve a conjugation that we don't know together. Ms. Smith is a good instructor, too. But if we had a hard question, Ms. Smith might not be able to answer, so we get to think about it. Some people might just want an answer. But it's not a terrible thing to be in a situation where we have to think on our own because she had to learn the language and we are learning the language also. It's not something being told by someone who knows it.

This comment suggests that the students did not always expect their instructor to know everything. It is perhaps more beneficial for students when the instructor does not have the answer so that the students are pushed to figure out the answer by discussion among themselves. Students are more inclined to practice critical thinking skills and communicate and negotiate for meaning in Japanese at the same time.

Case Study II

Methods

The second CBI case study was conducted in two classes of the second quarter of the third-year Japanese language course in a four-year state university. A total of 30 students were enrolled in two sections. A majority of the students, with a few exceptions of transfer students, had studied Japanese with a traditional approach in the same university during the previous two years. Under the traditional approach, new vocabulary items and grammatical elements were introduced first, and were the core content for speaking practice. Students did not have much opportunity to think critically or engage in true communicative activities. The emphasis of the courses was on learning grammar and vocabulary; grades were based on linguistic knowledge and accuracy. Most of the students thought learning Japanese was easy until they came to this third-year level.

This class was conducted using CBI material developed by the instructor. The goal of the course was for students to understand Japanese culture and people better by learning about the meaning of "work" and its role in Japanese culture. The topics included: (1) job hunting, (2) personal relations in the work place, (3) employment systems, and (4) discrimination related to employment.

Instead of the instructor giving a lecture on each topic, students were involved in a variety of activities. For example, students interpreted and analyzed what type of employees might be desired at a certain workplace by reading and listening to various types of authentic texts. The students also compared and contrasted information about Japan with related information about their own cultures. They also conducted internet and/or library research related to how one might properly state their opinions in the workplace within Japanese culture. Students listened to conversations, read literature on the expression of opinions by native speakers of Japanese, and then critically interpreted these texts. The final topic "discrimination at the workplace" required students to read texts on sexual discrimination, do research on other types of discrimination

in the workplace (e.g, gender, nationality, sexual orientation), and present their results in class. Students learned not only by conducting research themselves, but also from listening to their peers' presentations.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted twice with seven volunteer students by one of the researchers (who was not the instructor). The first interview was done on the first day of the fourth week of the quarter, and the second one on the first day of the ninth week of the same quarter. All the interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed. The interview addressed the following issues: (1) whether students found the content of the class interesting, (2) how much culture (i.e., Japanese culture and students' own culture) students thought they were learning, (3) whether students thought that the class made them think (compare, contrast, interpret, and analyze), and (4) what students found different about the learning materials used in this class compared to the ones used in previous Japanese language classes.

Findings

Students appreciated the authentic materials used in class and found them intellectually stimulating and relevant. Students were employing critical thinking skills. However, they did not initially seem to take full advantage of the benefit of CBI. Also, the amount of work sometimes overwhelmed the students. Towards the end of the quarter, however, students seemed to become more accustomed to CBI and what was expected of them. As a result, they engaged in more genuine communication among themselves.

Most of the students found the material interesting and the topics relevant to them. One student commented, "Now we are dealing with real topics. Situations are natural. Dialogues given before were fake, neatly pronounced." Also, students seemed to be learning more actively with CBI. One mentioned, "We are assigned to do some research about certain aspects of Japan, and I find it fun. I find a lot of cultural content." When interviewed, some students came to realize that they were engaged in critical thinking using the cultural content.

Although students took some of the elements of the new approach positively, they seemed to be rather confused by CBI. Their understanding was that the goal of CBI was to apply the grammar they had learned in previous years to more difficult readings. One student commented, "It is designed to take everything we learned and apply it to real life situations. Previously, we applied what we knew only to third-person situations. Now that we have the basic grammar and vocabulary, we have the ability to apply these skills to learn culture." Also, they seemed to have difficulty in adjusting to the new approach to instruction. CBI and the grammar-oriented approach differ in many ways. In fact, a majority of the case study students seemed to be bewildered and anxious about their performance. They compared the CBI course with the grammar-oriented instruction in the first two years of Japanese courses. One student commented that in the previous courses, "The material was too easy, and easily memorized for exams and quizzes." Adjusting to a new approach was not always easy for students. They were not sure how they would be evaluated and graded in the CBI course, and the amount of work required for

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this course was sometimes overwhelming for them. One student described the course as more challenging, more frustrating, and a little discouraging because she needed to spend more time studying.

The first interview, conducted in the middle of the quarter, revealed that the students seemed to be enjoying the content of the course and that they were beginning to practice critical thinking. Yet, they did not seem to engage in communication, but rather tried to apply their grammatical knowledge to understand the materials.

During the second interview that took place at the end of the quarter, however, students stated that they had become more accustomed to CBI. They were engaged in more genuine communication among themselves. All seven students felt more confident with their work in the course than they had in the first interview. In fact, students expressed more involvement in and engagement with the class discussions. They reported that they had come to pay more attention to what classmates would say in class and that they found group discussions beneficial. They also seemed to be more motivated to work although they still felt that they were assigned comparatively more work than in the first two years of their study of Japanese. They helped each other in and outside of the classroom with their coursework.

Discussion

These two case studies suggest that CBI can enable students to become active participants in their own learning process when the instructor assumes the role of facilitator. It was observed that students adopted increasing autonomy for managing and directing their own learning, and that the students and the instructors exhibited an increased awareness of the fluidity of their classroom roles.

In the first case study, students appreciated their new managerial roles, giving them increased freedom and the power to direct their own learning.

The second case study also indicated that the meaningful content allowed students to think critically, form their own opinions and ideas, and then communicate these to the class. Those students had been previously passive learners of Japanese grammar and vocabulary items in their first two years of language study. During the CBI class, they performed Internet/library research to gather information on their own. Also, they were thinking critically and engaging in true communication by exchanging opinions. The instructor was not an authoritative figure but rather remained on the sidelines to assist them in their activities. Although students were initially overwhelmed by the amount of work, they were motivated to work together and help each other. This motivation might have resulted from the fact that the content was found to be intellectually stimulating.

The findings of the two studies are primarily positive. However, the fact that some students did not take full advantage of CBI cannot be ignored. First, some students seemed to be confused about the goals of the course, even though both the goals and approach of the course were spelled out in the syllabus and discussed at the beginning of the quarter. Second, quite a few students appeared to be anxious, wondering what grammar and vocabulary they were

expected to master for quizzes and exams in order to receive a good grade. The concept of foreign language learning, for these students, was equivalent to learning a lot of grammar and vocabulary. The students were not used to the type of tests that assess content rather than solely linguistic knowledge.

In summary, it appeared that the shift from the traditional method to CBI was rather drastic for some students. The transition needs to be smooth for a successful implementation of CBI. This can be accomplished by altering the method of language training in the earlier stages, repeatedly reminding the students of the goals of the course and the benefit of CBI, and alleviating their anxiety by explaining in detail the type of assessment that will take place.

Although these case studies are small in scale, making generalizability questionable, we believe that our findings are hopeful. We hope that the results encourage instructors to unload their burden of the Atlas Complex, let students have more autonomy, and give students more opportunities to become more actively involved in their learning by exercising their critical thinking. College students are intelligent individuals who are capable of taking responsibility for their own learning. It is the instructor's job to allow them to apply all their skills to learn to become competent users of a language. While we have demonstrated that CBI is a valuable tool for language teaching and learning, the second case study also suggests that the transition from a more traditional teacher-centered approach to CBI can be challenging. The student interviews from both studies revealed that instructors and teaching methods had a tremendous influence on students' learning styles. The passive learning style they acquired over the years was extremely difficult to change. This could certainly impede successful implementation of CBI.

The two case studies suggest that CBI possesses the potential to empower both learners and instructors in the foreign language learning process. We believe that CBI is an effective way to change the traditional class dynamics, mostly by the potential for relieving the Atlas Complex that many instructors possess, and maximizing each student's participation and contribution. We feel that CBI would be even more beneficial if it were implemented at an earlier stage of language instruction.

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Output-Related Teaching Strategies Emphasized by Late Immersion Students

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Introduction

Since 1981, several secondary schools in Queensland, Australia have been offering late immersion programs in Asian and European languages for students aged 12-14 during the first three years of secondary schooling (Years 8-10). The programs are offered both in urban and in rural settings, both in private and in state high schools. Participation in an immersion program is optional for the students since all the immersion schools also offer the mainstream high school curriculum in English. The late immersion programs in Queensland involve about 1,000 students each year. The students come predominantly from middle-class homes and enroll in these programs without any background knowledge of the immersion language. Despite that, they successfully study about 60 % of their secondary school curriculum through the medium of the immersion language. The subjects or the subject areas taught through the immersion language are usually mathematics, science, social sciences and language arts (immersion language). (For further details on immersion programs in Australia, see de Courcy, 2002a).

How are these subjects taught? Teaching, in an immersion or any other type of program, “depends on the application of appropriate theory, the development of careful instructional designs and strategies, and the study of what actually happens in the classroom” (Richards 1990, p. vii). In our previous papers (e.g. de Courcy, 2002b, Mård, 2002), our focus has been on what actually happens in the classroom. In this paper, we have turned to another aspect of effective teaching, that is, the teacher’s strategies. The question we are asking in this chapter is: What, from the students’ point of view, are effective teaching strategies for fostering student output in an immersion situation? We still retain our focus on the student’s point of view, but their view of teaching rather than their own learning.

Output

Since the mid-1990’s, the emphasis in international immersion research has more and more moved from the second language input the students receive to the students’ own second language output. As de Courcy (2002b) concluded from her study of immersion in French and Chinese, “it seems to be in the production of output, after making sense of input by using the internal mode, that these students feel that their acquisition of the second language happens” (p. 149). However, output that facilitates language acquisition involves more than just speaking or writing the language.

Swain (1998, 2000) states that output has three functions. The first is that it promotes “noticing.” She says that, “producing French may force learners to pay more attention to (or to notice) how the language is used to express one’s intended meaning than does comprehending it” (Swain, 2000, p. 210). She states that learners should be pushed to move in their output a little

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beyond what they normally would produce. This activates the second function of output, that of hypothesis testing. In being pushed in their output, learners have to try out hypotheses about how the new language works. Furthermore, in receiving feedback from their interlocutors in the form of correction or comprehension, the learners add to the store of their knowledge about the new language. Interestingly, Swain (1998) adds that the fact “that immediate external feedback may not be facilitative or forthcoming does not negate the value of learners having experimented with their language resources” (p. 68). A third function of output noted by Swain (1998, 2000) is its metalinguistic function, where the learners’ output indicates that they are reflecting on, or have become aware of, the way they themselves, or others, have expressed something in the target language.

Projects in Canada (e.g. by Harley, 1998; Lyster, 1994, 1999; Swain 1995), in Finland (e.g. by Björklund, 1996; Buss, 2002; Mård, 2002; Södergård, 2002) and elsewhere in the world (e.g. by Duff, 1997) have aimed at identifying features of the immersion students’ productive second language by testing and observing them. These features, which, as Swain (2000) notes, though fluent, are markedly non-native like, are used as evidence of a need to promote student output in the immersion programs. This paper aims at discussing what the students themselves feel about their second language output and especially about the teachers’ role in it. Have student opinions regarding the importance of output and teacher strategies changed in the last ten years?

Table 1: The Four Sets of Data in This Article

Method of data collection	Year of data collection	Number of schools/ classes involved	Number of students involved	Number of lessons observed	Researcher
Student interviews	1990	1	9 immersion students (Y8-10) 9 former immersion students (Y11-12)		Michèle de Courcy
Student interviews, Classroom observations	1991	2	40 immersion students (Y8-10)	27 lessons, Feb-Jul	Michèle de Courcy
Student interviews, Classroom observations	1993	1	4 immersion students (Y9) interviewed 3 times each	Observed 6 days (April), taped 4 lessons (July-Sept)	Michèle de Courcy
Student questionnaires, Student interviews, classroom observations	2003	3/15	59 immersion students (Y8-10) 20 former immersion students (Y11-12)	12 lessons in 2 schools	Karita Mård

Note: Y = Year of schooling. The term Year, rather than Grade, is used in Australian school documents.

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The Data

This article is based on four separate sets of data collected in late partial French immersion programs in the state of Queensland in Australia. The data is summarized in Table 1. The 1990, 1991 and 1993 data were collected for three different projects. The first was designed to explore student attitudes to, and reasons for staying in, an immersion program. The second was an ethnographic investigation into classroom processes in language immersion classrooms. The third investigated processes of language acquisition in French and Chinese late immersion classrooms.

The 2003 data are a part of the data collected for a research project focusing on different aspects of the integration of language and content teaching in French late immersion programs in Australia. The project also includes data collected through immersion coordinator and immersion teacher questionnaires and interviews, but this article discusses only the student and the classroom data (see Table 1). The student questionnaires and interviews completed in 2003 included some questions on immersion teaching preferences, from activities used to language usage of the students and the teachers. The data in this article consist of the students' answers to the researchers' questions.

Methodology

We have analyzed the four sets of data presented in Table 1 with a focus on the immersion students' comments regarding immersion teaching. Some of the comments were spontaneous whereas others were prompted by the questions. We have organized the students' comments in the four sets of data in different categories to represent the teaching strategies that in the students' view either facilitated or hindered learning in the immersion program. The strategies the students emphasized could be categorized as relating to the general learning environment, to the needs of the learners, and to the students' second language input (teachers' output) and output. This article focuses on the strategies related to the students' second language output. Results for each category will be presented, followed by discussion of these results in relation to the literature. Finally we will offer some general conclusions.

Strategies to Manage the Output

Creating a Natural Environment for Output

It has long been recognized that the primary role of an immersion teacher is to ensure that the students are immersed in a rich written and oral second language environment. The following extract is a questionnaire response concerning the written second language environment:

- Q: How do the immersion teachers help you use your French?
- S (Y8, 2003): Write phrases up on the board. For example 'Can I please go to the toilet' (in French).

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This student has found the written second language displayed in the classroom to be an important and useful tool for oral use of the second language. The extract exemplifies well what the American immersion researcher and teacher trainer Myriam Met (2001) means by saying that if print materials are displayed around the classroom, students can use them as a springboard to help them find the information and the language they need to express their intended meaning in the immersion language.

It is worth mentioning that the immersion classrooms where the data were collected were rather denuded of the sort of displayed materials which Met is referring to. In some schools hardly any second language was displayed in the immersion classrooms. No secondary school immersion classroom was comparable with a typical immersion preschool or primary school classroom in displaying second language materials.

The students also made numerous comments on the oral second language environment in an immersion program. Constant use of the second language in the teaching was one of the most frequent descriptors of good immersion teaching that the immersion students mentioned in the interviews:

Q: Can you explain to me what you think is good immersion teaching? What does the teacher do? What material does he or she use? What does the teacher make you to do?

S (Y10, 2003): I think that when the teacher speaks to you in French that you try that they that you have to guess what they are saying. That also keep with the French. That not always translating but like keeping with the French.

S (Y8, 1991): The teachers just talk French.

The extracts above emphasize a preference from the students that the immersion teacher implements a principle that Romaine calls “one person – one language,” meaning in this case that the teacher uses only the second language in her or his teaching and thus surrounds the students with a large amount of second language input.

Extending the Second Language Context

The immersion students were asked to comment not only on the written and oral second language context inside the immersion classroom, but also on the extended second language context outside the immersion classroom and outside the school.

In comparing the four sets of data collected, with a more than 10-year interval between data collection rounds, we noticed changes in the way the teachers extended the second language context from the primary learning environment of the immersion classroom to the entire school. During the data collection in 1990, 1991 and 1993, the teachers were observed to consistently extend the second language context of the students even to the more informal environment of school grounds, using the second language even when communicating with the students outside the classroom. The strategy of language use implemented by the teachers was thus an extension of the “one person – one language” principle mentioned above.

During the 2003 data collection round, the second language was used in outside-of-classroom communication between immersion teachers and immersion students to a remarkably lesser extent than ten years earlier in the same schools. The strategy of language use had thus changed from “one person – one language” to another strategy for bilingual communication, “one situation – one language” (Romaine 1995). The strategy implemented by immersion teachers of using both the students’ first language and second language when communicating with them outside the classroom was accepted by the majority of the students interviewed in 2003 as a common practice. There were, however, some students who, when specifically asked about it, expressed a preference for the teachers to use the second language even outside the classroom:

- Q: How about outside the teaching, outside the classroom? Do they [the immersion teachers] use English or French with you?
- S (Y8, 2003): Yes.
- Q: So they use French?
- S: A bit outside. Not like like when we see them.
- Q: Would you like them to use all the time French?
- S: Yes and no. ‘Cause like some things like delicate issues like if you want to talk to them you do not want them to use French that time unless like you understood it like fluently. Yeah. Otherwise French.

The change in the strategy of language use in the immersion schools had led to a more specialized second language environment for the immersion students. This was most likely the main reason why most of the immersion students interviewed in 2003 felt that the second language was mainly an academic language for them:

- Q: How about like outside the classroom outside the teaching? Did they [the immersion teachers] use French or English?
- S (Y12, 2003): I think outside the classroom it was more relaxed so it was more, it was up to the teachers whether they spoke French or English. I didn’t mind either way because I suppose in the class I prefer to be spoken to in French because it’s more a learning experience but when it’s more like saying hi to the teacher it’s not really necessary to speak French.

The extract above suggests that the students accept whichever strategy they are exposed to as normal and do not necessarily realize the effect of the implemented strategy on their language learning. It becomes the teacher’s responsibility to ensure that the goals of the program are reflected in their choice of strategy. The research on bilingualism has shown that the strategy of “one person – one language” is more efficient when bringing up children bilingually than the strategy of “one situation – one language”, because the former strategy gives a higher motivation

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for a child to use both languages and provides multiple contexts of use for both languages (Romaine, 1995). In Cummins' (1984) terms, different strategies of language use have different potential to develop students' cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) and basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS). The context of use of the immersion language is also mentioned in the extract below, where a former immersion student discusses her second language proficiency after leaving the immersion program:

Q: Do you feel a difference now when you are out of immersion?
You've been one year without subject teaching in French. How is your French now?

S (Y11, 2003): It's like speaking which were improving has dramatically decreased I find. Because when we were in the immersion program we were like always learning new words and always like being updated with new techniques and stuff and speaking and writing and everything. But now it's like we've got one French lesson so we haven't got the wide range also. Even like sometimes just like science the language you use in science half of the time you don't use in like in normal life or French lesson. But it's good to have because like to be able to extend what you are talking about with other French people.

The student cited above has realized some of the facts that Myriam Met (1998) mentions when she discusses the suitability of different subjects to be taught through the medium of a second language. The student, as well as Met, admits that science gives a student extensive specialized vocabulary to describe scientific phenomena but that it does not necessarily give a student means for everyday conversation with a French-speaking person. Also Tarone and Swain (1995), Björklund (1996, p. 219) and Buss (2002, p. 331-333) suggest in their research reports on Canadian and Finnish immersion that immersion programs run the risk of developing a diglossic speech community, especially in the upper grades. This means that the students, like the ones in Tarone and Swain's (1995) study, use the second language for academic purposes and their first language for personal non-academic communication. One way of providing the immersion students with everyday non-academic second language is to extend the students' second language outside the classroom.

In one of the schools where our data was collected the immersion language arts teacher had made a special effort to extend the immersion students' second language context outside the school. The students valued this effort:

Q: Did you try to look for possibilities in using French like outside the school?

S (Y12, 2003): Using in speaking or?

Q: Yes or writing like or just like watching TV or.

- S: Sometimes actually like if there is a French movie and I'll just have a look. Just to see 'cause I understand just to see how much I understand. And with the material she [the teacher] provided us like I said the French magazines were useful for me and also with the CD's with music. I think that was great because everyone loves music. That was a good way to learn French and to enjoy as well.
- Q: Was it given by the teacher or?
- S: Yeah they have like 20 CD's and then we pass on every week or two weeks. And same with videos they have. We have lots of resources.
- Q: That's good. You don't have to look for them yourself.
- S: Exactly. It'd be hard to get French music yourself. Like to know what kind of music to get. So I think that was good.

The data collected in 2003 include several comments showing that the students wish to be able to use the second language outside the school context but that they would need some help or encouragement from the teachers in order to do so. One student wrote the following on a questionnaire in which the students were asked to indicate the resources that were most helpful in learning French: "I wish we could have French games on the computer so that we could learn between lessons" (Y8, 2003). Another student echoed this perspective:

- Q: Do you look for possibilities for using French outside the school now?
- S (Y10, 2003): Yeah I have been thinking of where to like where to yeah to use French like my speaking and knowledge. I haven't I haven't really noticed anything that has jumped out at me. I think yeah I think it would be good if I sort of came across something to use French.

The comments in the extracts above agree with the findings by Romney, Romney and Menzies (1995) on the importance of providing resources and guidance to immersion students in using French (the second language) outside the school.

All the immersion schools in our data extended the immersion students' second language context outside the school by establishing an exchange program with some schools in one or two French-speaking countries. The exchange programs were slightly different in the different immersion schools. In one school the exchange was a natural part of the immersion program and basically every immersion student participated in a six-week exchange either in Year 9 or in Year 10. In the two other schools the exchange was a less natural part of the immersion program, meaning that only some immersion students participated in a three-week exchange. As the following extract shows, the exchange program was highly valued by all the students who had been involved in it:

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- S (Y12, 1990): That was the catalyst.
- S (Y11, 1990): When we started I never thought that I'd actually ever use the language but then we went over to Noumea last year and I found my French improved just 100%.
- A (Y10, 1990): It was good to go to Noumea; that really helped with my accent.

Foster Output

The immersion students also valued highly those immersion teachers who maintained the second language context to the extent that it was natural for the students themselves to use the second language.

- Q How do you learn French?
- S (Y8, 1991): We learn it by speaking it all day. Like in a normal French class you don't really get to speak it so you don't know it very well.

The students also valued specific activities that the teachers set up especially to foster second language output. For example, the students mentioned that they often read aloud from textbooks, repeated what the teachers said in the second language, sang songs, did quizzes, used a "speaking wheel" or played a verb game:

- Q: How do the immersion teachers help you use your French?
- S (Y8, 2003): They have made a speaking wheel with things like describe your family or your bedroom, country, your idols or math problems each week.
- Q: If I ask you to explain to me what you think is good immersion teaching. What does a teacher do or what kind of material does he or she use when the teaching is good according to you?
- S (Y8, 2003): I think the best thing that has helped us learn French is the speaking wheel because it helps us speak and it helps us actually learn how to write things because once you **have** done the speech Ms. X [the teacher] would say: "it's good, it's too long, you should have said this instead of that". So that teaches us. Yes.
- Q: What kind of activities in the immersion do you find effective for learning French?
- S (Y9, 2003): A game where we have to be told a French verb and put it in a sentence in French.

Many of these activities relate to what Bernard Laplante (1997) describes as modeling of correct use of second language - a crucial strategy in helping students with limited second language proficiency move toward correct use of the second language.

Use of the Immersion Language

The immersion teachers not only maintained a natural second language context in the classroom and set up various activities to foster second language output; as the students reported, clear classroom rules were established which mandated that if they spoke to the teacher in class time, they had to make an effort to do so in French. Below is how one student explains the language usage in the immersion classroom:

- Q: How about your own language usage? Do they [the Immersion teachers] allow you to use English in the classroom?
- S (Y8, 2003): We get in trouble if we do. Like they don't mind if we explain something in French and if we don't know we say that in English but if we say everything in English we get into trouble. We'd start like "Is it nega-" and they say: "in French."
- Q: Do you like that or would you, do you like them pushing you to use?
- S: Yes 'cause otherwise you never get any better.

The notion of encouraging the students to speak in French was systematically emphasized even during the students' first year in immersion, especially in one of the three immersion schools in this study. The students in this particular school also commented that they were consciously pushed to use the second language. The extract above is from a student at that school. In the two other schools the Year 8 students were made aware that they would be pushed harder to use the second language in Years 9 and 10:

- Q: Did the teachers allow you to use English in the classrooms?
- S (Y11, 2003): At the beginning yes but then they got more strict. But I think we always got to talk in English.
- Q: Would you have liked them to be more strict?
- S: Yeah I would have actually.

The preceding two extracts illustrate that the comments given by the students in these two schools (second extract) differ somewhat from the comments given by the students in the one school with a more strict policy of pushing the students' use of second language (first extract). All the students that commented on the teachers pushing them to speak in French highly appreciated such a practice:

- Q: What does a good immersion teacher make you to do or expect you to do?
- S (Y8, 2003): Answer in French and that makes you have to think. And yeah just... Yeah everyone is pretty good. Mostly the same. But each class is some teachers are more strict about the amount of French that you speak.

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The extract above illustrates that the students feel the teachers in the same school differ in how firmly they encourage the students to use the second language. This was true even for the school with the more strict policy of pushing the students to use the second language. All the immersion students felt more positive about those teachers that were firm about the students' use of French than those who let them speak in English.

- Q: Do the teachers make you speak in French?
- S1 (Y10, 1991): That depends on the teacher. Some teachers are really slack about it and just let you slip back into English.
- S2: I speak most in French. [the subject].
- S3: And Science we speak a lot of French all the time.
- Q: Yeah because he won't accept an answer if you say it in English will he?
- S4: No he's really good like that. The harder the teacher if the teacher says, "look, you've got to talk in French" then you get helped so much more than if the teachers just let you slip out.

It seems that even in a self-selected school program where one of the goals is to learn a new language the students feel that they need to be pushed to use the second language. The extract below gives another example of how one student feels about the teachers' pushing them to use the second language:

- Q: How about your own language usage? Do they [the teachers] allow you to use English?
- S (Y10, 2003): Mr. X [a teacher] doesn't.
- Q: Do you like that?
- S: Yes 'cause that's gonna make you like more fluent because if you use only English you don't get feedback on it.
- Q: So you like them to force you?
- S: Yes 'cause you kind of forget it.

The comment "cause you kind of forget it" in the extract above suggests that the immersion students are primarily focused on understanding the teacher's second language input and learning the content matter. On the other hand, students have enrolled in immersion in order to also learn a new language. Several extracts in this article highlight students' beliefs that they should be producing the second language themselves in order to "make you more fluent in it." This point relates to the findings of a number of second language researchers, the most influential being Swain (1995) who notes that "using the language ... may force the learner to move from semantic to syntactic processing" of language (p. 249). The notion of getting better in the second language by using it oneself is most likely why the immersion students wish to be regularly pushed and reminded to speak in the second language, as noted by the students:

- Q: How do you learn French?
- S1 (Y8, 1991): We learn it by speaking it all day. Like in a normal French class you don't really get to speak it so you don't know it very well.
- S2 (Y8, 1991): When you ask questions in French you learn more 'cause then they can correct you and then you learn how to say it.
- Q: What's so important about speaking French, then?
- S (Y9, 1993): Because then you get to learn French more and you get used to it and so it starts clicking in your head.

The students not only talked generally about the teachers pushing them to use the second language but also commented on various ways the teachers do so. The most commonly mentioned and basic way of insisting on the use of the second language, which was included in many students' definitions of good immersion teaching, was that the teachers "don't listen to us when we speak in English." Many students said that the teachers would either disrupt or totally ignore a question or a comment if it was in the students' first language, as in this classroom example:

- S: [speaks in English]
- T (Y9 Science, 1993): *Je ne comprends rien du tout.* [I understand nothing at all.]
- S: But I can't say it in French.
- T: *Si tu peux.* [Yes you can.]

The students also talked about different types of fines and rewards that were used to push them to use the second language. Here are some examples given by two different students as questionnaire responses to the same question:

- Q: How do the immersion teachers encourage you to use your French?
- S1 (Y8, 2003): By making us put money in a jar if we speak English.
- S2 (Y8, 2003): By having crepes for the class that puts in the most effort to speak French, merit stickers, morning teas.

Only two of the three immersion schools used fines and rewards to push the students to use the second language. The comments on fines and rewards were given only by students in those two schools. The fines and rewards were used in these schools for the quantity, not the quality of the output. Researchers such as Kohn (1993) have serious doubts about the long-term effect of rewarding or punishing learning. Kohn (1993) summarizes international research on motivation and his conclusion is that rewards and punishments are useless or even counterproductive in the long term because they develop extrinsic rather than intrinsic motivation for learning: you work only to get the reward or not to get the punishment. Kohn (1993) further states that the use of rewards and punishments does not require the student to pay any attention to the original

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reasons for the unwanted behavior. Kohn recommends that teachers not use any rewards or punishments for learning, but he also gives examples of how to minimize the damage of rewards or punishments: give fewer and smaller rewards, give them privately, avoid making a big fuss over them, offer them as a surprise, don't create competition over rewards, give them to all who achieve a certain result, make the reward similar to the task, and let people choose their own reward (pp. 92-93).

Relating Kohn's view to the extracts above, it seems that the reward mentioned by the second student, i.e. having a morning tea together with the immersion teachers, would be a preferable, task-related reward to push the immersion students to use the second language.

Swain and Lapkin's recent research (2005) indicates that for certain situations in immersion classrooms, some use of the first language may actually help cognitive processing during group preparation of tasks, and, perhaps counter-intuitively, lead to superior performance in the second language when students present the results of their group work.

Extending Output

In general our data reveal that students felt that simply speaking in French was not the only important factor helping them to learn the language. What was needed was for the teacher to bridge the gap between what they could say and what they wanted to say.

- Q: How about yourselves? Are you allowed to use English in the classroom?
- S (Y8, 2003): No not really. She'll [a teacher] ask us to say it in French if we say it in English. And if we don't say it in French she'll get us to ask the question you know it's like in French you can say "how do you say this in French." So she'll write it down for you and then you have to read it and then say it.
- Q: Do you think it's good?
- S: Yeah, because if they didn't do it that way you wouldn't learn that much.
- Q: How do the immersion teachers help you use your French?
- S (Y10, 2003): If we are struggling they will give us hints of words to help us.

In this aspect of a student's language learning experience, the teacher guesses what a student is struggling to say, and provides the word or structure needed for the student to continue and express his or her meaning. This relates to the Vygotskyian notion of helping learners to work in their Zone of Proximal Development with the aid of a more experienced helper.

The following classroom example (from de Courcy, 2002b, pp. 89-90) shows one Year 9 student being "pushed" to explain in French as much as he could about the circulatory system. The student initially provides a very brief answer in English, but the teacher and fellow students gradually scaffold him to provide a complete sentence answer in French:

- T: *Qu'est-ce que c'est le système circulatoire? John?* [What is the circulatory system? John?]
- S1: *C'est le système qui ah qui ah.* [It's the system which ah which ah.]
- T: *Qu'est-ce qu'il fait?* [What does it do?]
- S1: Carries it away.
- T: *Qu'est-ce que c'est 'carry'?* [What is 'carry'?]
- S2: *Il transporte.* [It carries.]
- S2: *Transporter.* [To transport.]
- S1: *Transporter les ah sang.* [To transport the bloods.]
- T: *Le sang.* [The blood.]
- S1: *Sang.*
- T: *Où?* [Where?]
- S1: Around *le corps* you know around the body.
- T: *OK essaie. C'est le système répète c'est le système qui transporte.* [OK try. It's the system repeat it's the system which carries.]
- S1: *Transporte le sang* around the body. [Transports the blood around the body.]
- T: *OK essaie de le dire qu'est-ce que c'est 'around the body'?* [OK try to say it what is around the body?]
- S2: *Autour de le corps.* [Around of the body.]
- T: *Autour du corps.* [Around the body.]
- S1: *Autour de le corps.*

The teacher did not correct “de le” and moved on to veins, etc. Perhaps enough was enough. However, if the teacher had not insisted that John offer a complete answer in French, John would have left his answer at “carries it away.”¹

One of the explanations the immersion students gave for their preference to be pushed to use the second language was that frequent use of the second language guarantees feedback about their language:

- Q: How about your own language usage? Do they [the teachers] allow you to use English?
- S (Y10, 2003): Mr. X [a teacher] doesn't.
- Q: Do you like that?

¹ An interesting observation on coming back to this extract after a number of years, is that John only takes up the (often incorrect) suggestions of his classmates, rather than those of the teacher, maybe because they are the first suggestions he *hears* and they are therefore more salient. The teacher's correction “echo” does not seem to lead to uptake.

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S: Yes 'cause that's gonna make you like more fluent because if you use only English you don't get feedback of it.

This agrees with the findings in international research on second language acquisition, which emphasize the role of corrective feedback in developing accuracy in the new language. The immersion students in this data approved of corrective feedback in the form of explicit error correction:

Q: Did the teachers emphasize correctness?

S (Y11, 2003): Yes they did.

Q: Was it okay or?

S: Yeah, that was fine. Like if you were speaking and having a go and trying to say what you wanted to and got a word mixed up or other like problem they just correct you and you keep on going. Yeah. That helped because it mean it meant that that correction came naturally to you next time and you're still fluent.

Error Correction

Immersion education has a long tradition of promoting implicit rather than explicit error correction. The role of explicit error correction in immersion has been most extensively discussed in Roy Lyster's research since the mid 1990s. The comment given by the student in the extract above agrees with Lyster's (2002) claim: "That teachers are able to intervene in this way [give oral feedback on accuracy during a content lesson], without inhibiting students from continuing and without interrupting conversational coherence, suggests that prompts, at least in the context of children learning subject matter through their second language, are an expected part of classroom discourse" (p. 246). Lyster (2002) also argues that explicit error correction does not create anxiety among students. At least in late immersion, the students seem to expect to be explicitly corrected in their language:

Q: And the [immersion] teachers allow you to use English or was it like...?

S (Y11, 2003): They try to get us to speak as much French as possible. And if we don't know the terms that we need that we want to use like some technical terms whatever we say in English and they correct in French so we know the next time.

The process as described by the students appears to be as follows. First, there is input. Based on this input, learners form hypotheses about how the language works. Then they try out their hypotheses (output) and receive feedback from their teacher. This feedback then becomes input and is used to form new hypotheses.

Many students seemed to be aware that the immersion teachers sometimes emphasized fluency and sometimes accuracy:

- Q: Do the teachers emphasize that you have to do things correctly?
- S (Y9, 2003): In French they do, whereas in other subjects sometimes if we don't spell the French words correctly but we get the general idea of it they will mark it.
- S (Y10, 2003): Depends on the teacher. In French we try to get everything right but in other subjects like in history we just try to speak it as best as we can but she [the history teacher] is also really strict with spelling and everything as well.

Concluding Remarks

The data in this article were collected from adolescent students in a late partial immersion setting. The nature of this setting means that these students have had a different experience of immersion, in comparison with early total immersion students, who have only ever been in an immersion program. The late immersion students are thus able to discuss their immersion experience and compare it with both previous and current experiences in a non-immersion setting. Not only the setting, but also their conscious choice to participate in an optional late partial immersion program, has given them the means to reflect critically on their immersion experience.

It was obvious that all the immersion students interviewed in the four sets of data were satisfied with their late partial French immersion experience. Their general view of the immersion program was undoubtedly positive. However, when given the opportunity, they demonstrated a refreshing ability to point out details in their immersion experience that had personal relevance to their learning in both positive and negative ways.

Far from not having anything meaningful to say about immersion learning, the immersion students provided comments concerning classroom processes that were in tune with what international immersion researchers and experienced immersion teachers and teacher trainers have written about the role of student output in an immersion classroom. The teaching strategies used in the immersion classroom do indeed have an impact on the students' learning. For example, the themes we found in our data resonate strongly with those strategies to encourage second language use emphasized by LaVan (2001), from the teacher's point of view:

1. Create a classroom and school context with clear expectations for second language use.
2. Acknowledge that neither rewards nor punishments affect behavior positively.
3. Set language learning objectives.
4. Develop non-academic vocabulary.
5. Organize classroom activities and provide opportunities that maximize students' second language output (use group and pair activities, develop an activity-centred classroom, plan for creative expression in the second language).

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Students and teachers need to be active in creating and maintaining a context in which immersion learning can take place. The teacher plays an important role in the immersion classroom by maintaining the second language context, using appropriate teaching strategies, responding to the needs of the learners, and fostering a supportive learning environment in which students feel safe to extend their output in the target language.

The final pedagogical implication of this study is that teachers in immersion programs need to be made aware of the processes and strategies being used by their students when they are working in the classroom. The data presented in this article show that the students are a valuable source of information about how learning occurs in immersion programs. Teachers need to be open and sensitive to the needs of the learners, but this is difficult to achieve without consulting the learners themselves.

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Teaching Identity: The Discursive Construction of a Community of Practice

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There is more than a verbal tie between the words common, community, and communication... The communication which ensures participation in a common understanding is one which secures similar emotional and intellectual dispositions.

—Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (1916/1963)

The individual consciousness not only cannot be used to explain anything, but on the contrary is itself in need of explanation from the vantage point of the social ideological medium.

—V. N. Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1929/1973)

Introduction

This paper presents research into the development of the teaching identities – the voice and vision – of the first cohort of student teachers in a new Bachelor of Education degree at the six women's colleges of the Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The Higher Colleges of Technology's Bachelor of Education degree in Teaching English to Young Learners is a four-year program that prepares Emirati women, mostly recent high school graduates though there are a few mature students, for English language teaching positions in government primary schools, as part of the UAE's Emiratization (nationalization of the workforce) process. Like all the HCT's programs, the Bachelor of Education in Teaching English to Young Learners is delivered in English. The first cohort, the subjects of the study on which this paper is based, began their teacher education degree in September 2000 and completed the degree in June 2004.

Any research is inevitably both partial and situated, deriving from a particular place and perspective. In the present study, my involvement stems from my having led all aspects of development of the program, initially as a consultant from the University of Melbourne and later as the Head of the HCT's Education department¹. I begin in the section below by describing the particular theoretical framework and the specific context within which this research is situated. I then briefly outline the research methods of data collection and analysis before going on to look at some illustrative samples of data. I conclude by considering possible interpretations of the data and consequent implications for further research into student teacher identity development in the UAE context that may have resonance elsewhere.

¹ As a multi-campus system, with colleges in the cities of Al Ain, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah and Sharjah, the HCT employs departmental heads, who are based in a central office in Abu Dhabi, and whose role includes academic leadership, management and administration. Thus I was not the 'teacher' of the students in this study, although I did teach them in a guest lecturer capacity on occasions.

The Theoretical Framework

This paper theorizes learning to teach as the discursive construction of a teacher identity within an evolving community of practice. It thus seeks to move beyond notions of learning to teach as the development of a set of portable, decontextualized skills, methods and techniques. Rather, it takes inspiration from a number of teacher educators who, building on developments in social and cultural theory, have framed teacher education in terms of the development of a teacher identity, where identity refers to individuals' knowledge and naming of themselves, as well as others' recognition of them as a particular sort of person.

This line of thinking can be seen in the work of Britzman (1991), who argues against viewing teaching as competence in a range of skills and techniques, suggesting that "Learning to teach – like teaching itself – is always the process of becoming: a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can become" (p. 8). Similarly, Danielewicz (2001) writes, "I regard 'becoming a teacher' as an identity forming process whereby individuals define themselves and are viewed by others as teachers" (p. 4). Moreover this work of identity formation is intimately related to both the discourses and the communities we are working within. Miller Marsh (2003) puts it thus:

In other words, we are continually in the process of fashioning and refashioning our identities by patching together fragments of the discourses to which we are exposed... understanding how teachers fashion their identities is especially important, since much of the work that is done in the classrooms by teachers and their students involves the crafting of identities with and for one another. (p. 8-9)

This shift has been paralleled by an increasing acceptance of interpretive methods in researching education generally (Freebody, 2003), and teacher identities in particular, including teachers' lives (Goodson & Sikes, 2001; Mitchell & Weber, 1999) and the formation of teacher thinking (Britzman, 1991; Danielewicz, 2001; Mayer, 1999; Miller Marsh, 2003) specifically. It has also been paralleled by an emphasis on identity and community in learning generally, not just within teacher education:

Education in its deepest sense and at whatever age it takes place, concerns the opening up of identities – exploring new ways of being that lie beyond our current state... Education is not merely formative – it is transformative. ... issues of education should be addressed first and foremost in terms of identities and modes of belonging and only secondarily in terms of skills and information. (Wenger, 1998, p. 263)

The notion of education as identity transforming had resonance with my work in teacher education in the UAE. Indeed, over the four years during which this first cohort of HCT teacher education students completed their degree, a number of related factors struck me as having particular significant interest and requiring further exploration. First was the degree to which the student teachers were exemplifying teacher education as the taking on of a new *identity*. Second was the strength of the *community* the student teachers were creating. And third was the passion

and commitment with which the students embraced and took up the *discourses* of education that comprised the degree. Given the central role of *discourse*, *identity* and *community* in this study I will briefly discuss each of these three key concepts before examining the context of the research.

Discourse

The student teachers' passionate embrace of educational discourses was one of the key impetuses for this research. Indeed, amongst other things, this study is crucially concerned with the power of *discourse*. However, in order to fully appreciate this productive power, we need to unpack the complex meanings carried by this term.

Discourse is used in this paper in the Foucaultian sense of "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1971, p. 49), or less enigmatically, "ways of signifying experience from a particular perspective" (Titscher, Meyer, Wodak & Vetter, 2000, p. 30). I take an eclectic stance, drawing on a range of related approaches including: Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1992, 2003); Discourse Theory (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Torfing, 1999; Howarth, 2000; Mouffe, 2000, 2005); and Discursive Psychology (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Potter, 1996). However, despite their differences, all discourse analytical approaches agree on the following points with regard to the word/world relationship (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002, p. 12). First, language is not a reflection of a pre-existent reality. Second, discourse is co-extensive with social relations of differing position and power. Third, discourses are maintained or transformed in discursive practices which involve a constant negotiation and renegotiation of meaning. Fourth, the maintenance or transformation of these patterns can be explored through discourse analysis. Discourse thus implies a mutually constitutive relationship between language and society, between the word and the world at multiple levels: at the level of systems of knowledge and belief; at the level of interpersonal relations; and at the level of intrapersonal identities (Fairclough, 1992). This brings us to the second key concept, identity, discussed in the following section.

Identity

Like discourse, the notion of *identity* was also implicated in the impetus for this study, insofar as I was intrigued by the students' embodiment of learning to teach as the taking on of a new identity. By this I mean that the students seemed to exude a whole new sense of self as they reconceived themselves as 'teachers.'

In his overview of twentieth-century theories of subjectivity, Mansfield (2000) identifies a fundamental division between two broad schools of thought: between approaches typically found in psychoanalytic theories which view the self as a core 'essence' and approaches in social and cultural theory that view the self as a 'construct' (see also du Gay, Evans & Redman, 2000). Specifically, poststructuralist perspectives on identity have pointed out that individuals do not construct identities in a social, cultural and political vacuum; rather, sociocultural and sociopolitical discourses will determine what resources are available for use in the ongoing project of identity construction, just as the outcomes of this process, in terms of identities, will in turn shape the discursive patterns at work in different contexts (Weedon, 1987, 2004; Burr, 1995; Jenkins, 1996; Hall & du Gay, 1997; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004).

Such identities are complex and multi-dimensional, constructed across innumerable sites and situations and within a range of contexts by individuals, utilizing the resources of imagination, as they negotiate and make sense of multiple, often competing discourses and populate particular “figured worlds” (Holland, Skinner, Lachicotte & Cain, 1998). In the context of teacher education, discursively constructed identities allow us to posit a model of teacher formation where particular social conversations are appropriated and reconstructed within the ongoing and never-completed work of self-fashioning. As Miller Marsh (2003) notes, “from this perspective, teacher thinking is a *mélange* of past, present, and future meanings that are continually being renegotiated through social interaction” (p. 6).

However, the student teachers’ identities are actually being *co*-constructed. This collective dimension generates particular and powerful synergies as people mutually engage in a common enterprise, drawing on the same repertoire of social and cultural tools, as part of what we can call an evolving “community of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). This third key concept is discussed below.

Communities of Practice

The third impetus for this study was the strength of the *community* the student teachers were creating and the powerful synergies that were operating among them as they learned to teach within the Bachelor of Education program. A fruitful framework for thinking about the sort of synergies that working together and being part of a group can engender is offered by the concept of a “community of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). A community of practice can be defined as a group of people *mutually engaged* in a *joint enterprise* that entails the development and utilization of a *shared discourse* repertoire (Wenger, 1998). Being at the same time a theory of learning, meaning, practice and identity, the notion of a community of practice is thus a useful model for describing a set of people whose very *raison d’être* as a group is centred on learning the meanings and practices of teaching and developing a teaching identity. Having briefly outlined the key concepts underpinning this research, I will now discuss the study’s context, utilizing ‘discourse’ as a means of linking the disparate social and educational elements.

The Discursive Context

The past 30 years have witnessed the emergence in the Arabian Gulf of some of the world’s wealthiest states, resulting from the massive oil boom of the 1970s. Like other oil-rich Gulf States, the UAE has used oil revenues as an instrument for penetrating and integrating civil society through the development of physical and social infrastructure, including the education system (Kazim, 2000). This has been accompanied by a considerable ideological drive that is an inevitable aspect of the myth-making process of nation formation – and Findlow (2000, p. 44) describes the United Arab Emirates as a prime example of the ‘invented’ or ‘willed’ nation – including media-led eulogies of the wisdom and virtue of the country’s political leaders and rhetorical celebration of the harmonious, multidimensional nature of UAE society. And while some commentators have praised the UAE as one of the “rare examples of a country which has successfully used income from its huge natural resources for its long-term development” (Shihab, 2001, p. 258), other commentators, while not disputing the impressive achievements

of the UAE, and in particular its dynamic economy, have noted the presence of a number of domestic ‘pathologies’ that continue to undermine this achievement, such as the anachronistic political structure, the lack of transparency in decision-making, and the all-pervasive culture of ‘influence’, in which nationality, family, and status continually come before considerations of merit or qualifications (Davidson, 2005).

Kazim (2000) identifies three discourses operating in the contemporary UAE, which he describes as ‘conservative’, ‘progressive’ and ‘moderate’ discourses. The first seeks to preserve past patterns, the second embraces globalization, while the third seeks a balance between them (Kazim, 2000, p. 434). All three discourses are accommodated by UAE policy makers as each contributes in different ways to the sociodiscursive reproduction of the contemporary UAE social formation (Kazim, 2000, p. 452-456).

The progressive discourse is most visible in the exponentially expanding and dynamic UAE economy. In order to support rapid economic and social development, the education system has gone from 74 schools in 1971, the year of independence, to over 600 in 2004. In terms of indicators of education levels, for example literacy rates, remarkable progress has been made; less than 20% of the population was literate prior to independence in 1971 (Kazim, 2000) in contrast to rates of 75% for women and 70% for men by 2000. However, despite these successes, the UAE’s education system has come in for some rather severe criticisms from both internal (Taha-Thomure, 2003; Al Nowais, 2004) and external (Gardner, 1995; Loughrey, Hughes, Bax, Magness & Aziz, 1999) sources for its rigidity and reliance on rote methods. The situation has not been assisted by the prevailing bureaucratic UAE educational culture, reflected in policies and practices which construct teachers as technicians of the textbook, who are expected to implement and conform but not to develop or reflect as autonomous professionals. Simplifying somewhat, it could be argued that in terms of Hargreaves’ (2000) model of the four ages of teacher professionalism, the UAE government schools reflect a mixture of characteristics from the first, pre-professional, and the second, autonomous-professional ages; whereas the HCT is equipping its student teachers with the habits and discourse of collegial-professional practice found in Hargreaves’ third age.

This ‘pedagogical gulf’ is exacerbated by the political distance between the student teachers, who as Emiratis enjoy elite status in this relatively stratified society, and the majority of the English teachers in UAE schools, who are non-Emirati, expatriate Arabs² – in essence, ‘guest workers’ – and who have little or no opportunity for systemic professional development or advancement, are employed on one-year renewable contracts and paid up to 50% less than their Emirati counterparts (personal correspondence with UAE Ministry of Education), and have little or no experience in supervising the student teachers that are being trained to take over their jobs as part of the Emiratization process.

Within this context, two key aims of the HCT B.Ed. degree are to introduce student teachers to scaffolded, child-centred approaches to teaching English, and to encourage students and graduates as English teachers to be agents of pedagogical change in Emirati schools. The

² Ninety-nine percent of male and seventy percent of female English teachers are expatriates from other Arabic-speaking countries, including Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Tunisia.

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expectation that student teachers will contribute in significant ways to the Emiratization of the UAE cannot be overstated. As noted above, the not inconsiderable challenge of improving education and student learning outcomes needed to be matched with a teacher education degree program of internationally recognized quality and high impact. The design of the B.Ed. program resonates strongly with the nature and scope of education degrees undertaken in countries such as the US, the UK, Canada, and Australia, where the majority of the faculty who co-developed and teach the degree gained their professional qualifications and experience. An example of this is the core focus on constructivist pedagogy, that is, on the notion that knowledge is constructed by learners through their engagement in thinking, rather than being transmitted to them by teachers, textbooks or the curriculum. Constructivism entails a focus on meaningful, purposeful classroom activities which provide opportunities for rich, complex and 'situated' learning (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Wells, 1999). Constructivism also implies a change in the role of the teacher, who becomes a facilitator of learning, assisting students' performance, rather than transmitting or dispensing knowledge (Korthagen, 2001; Loughran & Russell, 1997; Richardson, 1997). Students' roles also change, with the emphasis on purposeful activity in the constructivist classroom, as they become potential sources of "socially embedded" learning for peers rather than just passive recipients of knowledge.

In response to a repeated criticism that teacher education involves student teachers learning 'about teaching' rather than learning 'to teach' (Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997; Korthagen, 2001), and to ensure that links are made between practice and theory, teaching practice in classrooms and schools is deliberately constructed as the core of the HCT B.Ed. program. This is where the learning that the students engage in at the college is "realized," in the sense of being put into practice or made real. It is also where the college learning is tested and informs further learning in the college classroom. The teaching practice component, or "strand" increases through the degree, culminating in the final semester with the students undertaking a 10-week internship supported by a college mentor, or supervising college teacher (SCT), and a supervising school teacher (SST).

In order to enrich students' perspectives on the classroom and teaching, the Education Studies strand develops an understanding of the basic underlying principles of teaching, learning and schooling, including theories of child and human development, first and second-additional language development, theories of learning, including behaviorist, cognitive-developmental and social constructivist theories. Students also develop their understanding of how to plan for and teach a successful English program in elementary schools, and analyze classroom management, curriculum development and syllabus design and assessment, while also considering the way in which the societal context of schooling affects what goes on in the classroom.

Another key strand of the B.Ed. degree is English language studies where, in addition to general language proficiency, students develop competence in specific classroom language including the use of language for explaining, monitoring, prompting, eliciting, encouraging, correcting, as well as for purposes such as telling stories and singing songs, chants and rhymes. Additionally, students develop their knowledge of the nature of language and its uses, including formal language systems (phonology, semantics, grammar, genre and discourse) and related linguistic

terminology, but also the social aspects of language, recognizing how the ways in which the purposes for which it is being used shape the forms it takes and examining notions such as discourse communities, language variation, and the links between English and globalization.

Indeed, we emphasize the socio-political dimension of language education as a socially constructed, discursive practice with implications for power and position (Kelly-Hall & Eggington, 2000; Corson, 2001). We recognize that education generally, and teaching specifically, is an “amalgam” of discourses (Coldron & Smith, 1995) that are appropriated and synthesized in the process of learning to teach. In this view the task of learning to teach is to create, through this process of discursive appropriation and synthesis, a philosophy of education, an “orientation to teaching” (see Freeman & Freeman, 2001), in the broadest terms. Such a philosophy will include assumptions and beliefs: about the why and how of teaching and learning; about relationships to learners, to social and institutional contexts and to wider discourse communities of teaching and education; and the embodiment of all of these in a coherent “teaching self” (Danielewicz, 2001). As will become evident in the latter part of this paper, the students, as a community and individually, embraced the ‘progressive’, ‘constructivist’ ideologies of the HCT B.Ed. degree wholeheartedly. First, however, in the section below, I outline the methodology of this research study, including the collection and analysis of the data, where again discourse is a central feature.

The Research Methodology

The research question underlying this study, and also providing the focus of this paper, is:

In what ways have the social and educational discourses that have shaped the contemporary UAE and the HCT’s language teacher education program been taken up by the students, as they construct their identities as teachers and as a community of practice?

Given that this is a discourse-based study of identity that seeks to explore the discursive construction of students’ teaching identities as members of an evolving community of practice, it was a strategic decision to seek forums involving the ‘social justification of belief’ in language and conversation and to treat these as the core data.

The ‘conversations’ that provided this data involved four sets of face-to-face focus group interviews and online Web Course Tools (hereafter, Web CT) discussions, enabling me to elicit the discursive resources employed by the student teachers in the project of their identity construction in spoken and written modes. The focus group conversations, conducted in the third year of the students’ degree, were organized around a set of questions designed by me as the researcher (three sets conducted by me in English and one set conducted with a colleague in Arabic). They gave the students the opportunity to engage in interactive face-to-face discussion with me present during the discussion. The Web CT conversations, conducted during the fourth and final year of the students’ degree and involving over 750 postings, were organized into threads created by the students around broad topics co-constructed by the students and the B.Ed. faculty. They afforded the students the opportunity to engage in discussions in the virtual environment of cyberspace without my presence.

The process of analyzing the data involved three main stages: manual coding, handwritten notes and annotation of the data; a further coding process using the NUD*IST (Non-numerical, Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching and Theorizing) qualitative data analysis software package; and a Discourse Analysis which involved examining the written and spoken texts in terms of vocabulary and grammar, as well as cohesion and text structure. The cyclical process of moving back and forth between the data, the literature and the research questions reflected a gradual refinement and clarification of the key discursive themes structuring the data. In this context, it is important to note in relation to the two sets of data that although there are differences in terms of mode and method of collection, the two sets have enough in common in terms of field and tenor – that is in terms of the fundamental discourses and the interpersonal relationships operating throughout and structuring the texts – that they could legitimately be treated as one set.

Discursive construction was explored within this study at four levels: the discursive illumination of the ways in which the student teachers form and exemplify a community of practice; the discursive construction of the community's systems of knowledge and belief; the construction of intrapersonal identity through a focus on the construction of one student teacher; and the discursive construction of interpersonal, social relationships among members of the community. In the present paper I focus on the discursive construction of the community's systems of knowledge and belief and the discursive construction of interpersonal relations³.

The Discursive Construction of Systems of Knowledge and Belief

One of the most frequent discursive strategies the student teachers employed in establishing the parameters of their community of practice is the drawing of a sharp dividing line between the past and the present/future. This usually entailed a fierce rejection of the past in favor of the present. As one student in a focus group discussion put it, "I just ... threw out everything I had about teaching from the past and I just acquire what I have...what I'm learning now and what I'm doing at schools" (*Sahar, FG 1*). Many students gave a little more acknowledgement of the influence of past teaching approaches, while still insisting that they have moved irrevocably beyond these approaches. Linguistically the members of the community of practice establish this distinction by repeatedly contrasting 'then' and 'now' in constructions such as: "*I had always thought... however in the first few months of B.Ed....*"; "...most of us *started... however now...*"; and "*I never thought... however now...*". The emphasis in these constructions is on a clean break with the past rather than a more evolutionary change or developmental growth in understanding. It is worth mentioning in this context that there was no suggestion that the students should contrast the past and present in discussing their beliefs; rather, this seems to have been a construction that the students were particularly drawn to.

I noted earlier that one of the impetuses for the study was the students' exemplification of learning to teach as the taking on of a new identity. In the following posting, comments about feeling 'like a different person' offer a passionate testimony of change that explicitly suggests the convert's wholehearted and personal embrace of a new present/future and rejection of the past.

³ Data from the Web CT postings is referenced using the format: Student (pseudonym), Topic title, Thread title ('Re' indicates response). Data from focus groups is referenced as FG 1, 2, 3 or Arabic.

When I started teaching I used all the ways I was taught with in the schools, such as the teacher speaks all the time and the students listen... Now I feel like a different person and I cannot believe that I was doing so with the students.

Nabila, *Beliefs about teaching: Re: My beliefs have changed in stages*

Another impetus I noted was the students' enthusiastic embrace of educational discourses. For one student teacher, twelve years of belief in what were once viewed as 'perfect methods' were overthrown in just a few months of study:

Throughout twelve years of being a student in school, I had always thought that the best methods in making the students understand the lesson were through using the traditional methods such as memorizing... However, in the first couple of months in the B.Ed., all my beliefs about these perfect methods changed.

Nafisah, *Beliefs About Teaching: What are the appropriate methods to use in our classrooms?*

An additional element in the students' distancing of past from present is their rejection of the emotional, as distinct from pedagogical, approaches of their past teachers. This comes through strongly in the posting below in the description of the teachers as being "like monsters" and in the emphatic final words:

In my opinion, this belief comes from our childhood education where the teachers are like monsters, they didn't care for our feelings and they were treating us like adults without any sense. I hope that those days don't come back again and I hope that these kind of teachers DON'T EXIST AGAIN IN THE WORLD AT ALL... Nashita, *Beliefs About Teaching: Re: Change of name, emphasis in original*

These comments convey an epic, epoch-marking, almost apocalyptic wish to break with the past that preceded engagement with learning to teach and the establishment of the B.Ed. students' community of practice. There is also a powerful sense of relief, also reflected in another student's comment in a focus group discussion: "We thought that we would be as our teachers but thanks, no. Thanks to God we are not like them" (Nabila, FG 2). In fact, such is the prevalence of this rejection of the past and concomitant commitment to the 'new,' as well as the personal and professional passion with which the students testify to their new beliefs, that, echoing Nabila's reference to God, it is possible to talk in terms of a 'conversion.'

Overall, this distinction between the 'past' and the 'present/future' is symptomatic of the student teachers' most characteristic discursive strategy, entailing the setting up of a series of binary oppositions that serve to define, establish, maintain and monitor the community. These binaries revolve around a core opposition between the 'new' teacher, who uses 'new' or 'modern' teaching methods and approaches, and the 'traditional' teacher using 'traditional' methods and approaches in the classroom. The 'traditional' teachers include the majority of the teachers the students experienced in their own schooling as well as the majority of the supervising school teachers (SSTs) they have worked with during their teaching placements in government schools. Hence this is also an opposition between 'them' and 'us' which involves the students investing significantly in a discursive divide between themselves and the teachers they are and will be working alongside.

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A number of other distinctions support this major discursive opposition between the traditional teachers of the past and the new teachers of the present and future. Students are often represented as being treated with insensitivity or cruelty in the traditional classroom, whereas sensitivity, kindness and a concern for the whole student and their individual needs is the *modus operandi* in the new, learner-centered classroom. In ‘traditional’ classrooms, learning is passive and learners display low motivation and self-esteem, whereas ‘new’ classrooms involve active learning and motivated learners with positive self-esteem. Other oppositions focus on the way that the ‘new’ classroom is characterized by equality whereas rigid hierarchy dominates the ‘traditional’ classroom. Teaching in the ‘traditional’ classrooms is an ‘easy’, straightforward business involving transmission of knowledge, whereas in ‘new’ learner-centered classrooms it is complex and challenging and the teacher is more of a facilitator. These binary oppositions, as represented in the discourse of the student teachers in the HCT B.Ed., are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The Discursive Construction of the ‘Traditional’ Versus the ‘New’ Teacher

Traditional Paradigm	New Paradigm
The past - traditional teachers and teaching—them	The present/future - new teachers and teaching—us
Insensitivity / cruelty	Sensitivity / kindness
Learners as homogenous	Learners as heterogeneous
Teacher-centered	Student/learner/child-centered
Passive learning	Active learning
Low motivation and self esteem	High motivation and self esteem
Hierarchy	Equality
Teacher as transmitter	Teacher as facilitator
Teaching as easy	Teaching as complex

Note. From *Teaching identity: The discursive construction of an evolving community of practice*, By Matthew Clarke, 2005, Unpublished PhD thesis, Melbourne: University of Melbourne.

The development and maintenance of an evolving community of practice has implications for the ways in which student teachers relate to each other. Ideational and interpersonal realities are co-constructed through statements and utterances that achieve the dual discursive ends of construing social events and social actors. Once established, this alignment between the community’s members and its beliefs needs to be monitored and maintained. This monitoring and maintenance work in terms of the community’s interpersonal relations, is explored in the following section.

The Discursive Construction of Interpersonal Relations

We have seen how the community can be characterized by a set of beliefs grouped together under the label ‘new’ teaching, defined by characteristics such as belief in student-centred teaching, in active learning, in sensitivity to learners, in learners as heterogeneous, in a concern

for high motivation and self esteem, and in teaching as complex. To ensure the ongoing loyalty and adherence of the community, these beliefs need explaining, justifying and defending – what Edwards and Potter (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Potter, 1996) describe as ‘warranting’ – as part of the ongoing work of legitimizing both the beliefs and the community. In this section I look at some of the ways this is achieved.

One of the most characteristic features of the student teachers’ interpersonal communication is the frequent use of an introductory “I agree with you” or an equivalent statement offering support, such as “You remind me of my belief...”; “Your belief about teaching is similar to mine...”; “You are right and I strongly agree with you”; and “I strongly agree with your point of view...”. These phrases exemplify the bolstering and support the students offered each other as they mutually co-defined the joint enterprise and the shared discursive repertoire of their community of practice. By contrast, expressions of disagreement were far fewer and were often couched in tentative terms, such as “I don’t really agree with you in all aspects” and “I don’t really agree with you... however, yes, I agree with you that sometimes...”

However, the work of maintenance and monitoring was often conducted in less direct ways. One such strategy is the inclusive embrace of other community members in statements made by one member. Thus, for example, a student offers the following as she reflects on the value of the internship experience: “Well, in fact the internship was a valuable chance for all of us to show that this new generation of teachers are capable of being teachers” (*Amani, Insights from the internship: Re: Goodbye TP*). Here the use of “all of us” which then equates to “this new generation of teachers” works as a discursive strategy for making the statement applicable to all the community’s members.

Other postings made reference to a common future destiny shared by members of the community: “Most of us will manage to be very good teachers and we WILL make a difference in schools because of our qualifications” (*Nuha, Beliefs about teaching: Re: My new thoughts*). The use of three inclusive pronouns, ‘us’, ‘we’ and ‘our’ in this brief statement shows the student teacher working hard at the ongoing task of maintaining the community while the capitalized WILL serves to underline the determination to fulfil the common mission that holds the community together. The oppositional model we saw earlier is present here again as the schools are constructed as being in need of the reforming efforts of the student teachers.

The work of community maintenance and monitoring was also conducted through what Fairclough calls discursive strategies of “legitimation.” Fairclough (2003, p. 98) outlines four strategies for the legitimizing of beliefs: authorization, rationalization, moral evaluation and mythopoesis.

Authorization is the justification of a belief by an appeal to an authority, be it tradition, custom, law or a person who has the authority of expertise in the field in question. An example of this is the following taken from a discussion about how to put ‘theories into practice’ and how the approaches the students utilized related to the theories they had studied:

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No one at this level [year four] didn't use the social interaction through small group, pair and whole class interaction... as Vygotsky stated that "language develops entirely through helpful social interaction" (Lightbown & Spada, 23). So this is really an important goal that we have to keep in mind for our career as a teacher... *Rukan, What I'm looking forward to in my teaching career: Re: Theories into practice.*

Rukan derives legitimacy for interactive approaches in the classroom from the authority of Vygotsky (referenced from a course text) and then rationalizes a conclusion from this. The use of academically authoritative sources was a common strategy, which is not surprising given that the students have been trained to rely on academic sources of authority in their coursework in the degree. It is important to note that the legitimacy deriving from a reference to authority doesn't require the originating source to be explicitly cited. Numerous forms of knowledge are accepted in the discourse community and only require the relevant lexical items as proof of authority:

My belief about teaching is that teachers should consider the different learning styles while teaching children as some of them are more visual, some are more kinesthetic and some are more auditory. Therefore teaching materials need variety of content and approach to cater for the different learning styles. *Rida, Beliefs about teaching: Different learning styles*

Here the lexical items – visual, kinesthetic and auditory – refer to Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences, which provides the authority for Rida's conclusion. The causal conjunction 'therefore' indicates to her audience that she is moving to this stage in her argument.

In an example of *rationalization*, a student draws on the community's belief about the need for students to be motivated to argue for the related community belief in the need for sensitivity towards learners in the classroom:

In my opinion one of the teacher's responsibilities is creating an understanding and comfortable educational environment for the students. This will lead the students to be more interested and motivated to learn. *Abra, Beliefs about teaching: Teachers' responsibilities*

However, it is worth noting that the very persistence of rationalization strategies, as well as maintaining the coherence of the community, is also indicative of a discursively contested terrain. As Edwards and Potter note: "Giving claims a basis is a sign of dispute rather than harmony; warranting is an occasioned phenomenon... [and] factual discourse is constructed to be apparently factual and resilient to rhetorical onslaught" (Edwards & Potter, 1992, p. 152). In the case of the students' community of practice, much of what we might describe as 'factual rhetoric' is aimed at securing the ongoing cohesion and commitment of the community against the potential claims of 'traditional' teachers and teaching.

Moral evaluation refers to legitimation through appeal to value systems. An example of this is the following excerpt in which a student argues for putting up displays in the classroom that include all students' work rather than just the pieces judged by the teacher to be the best. The student

teacher relates an incident when a teacher threw most of the class's work in the bin and makes her appeal in the form of a series of rhetorical questions:

What is your reaction going to be if you knew that she is going to throw the rest of the displays in the bin?... Doesn't she know that these students have feelings?... What are the students going to do with this teacher? *Amirah, Moral issues:*
Teacher's morality

Here the student invites her peers to put themselves in the position of the relatively powerless students in the classroom and uses rhetorical questions to appeal to moral values of sensitivity and the innocence and vulnerability of children.

Mythopoesis refers to the legitimation that is derived from narratives. This can take the form of a shared narrative interpretation of events, such as the 'journey' from the 'teacher-centred' world of school to the 'student-centred' environment of the college, which serve both to establish common beliefs and understandings, and to consolidate the interpersonal connections based on shared experiences among members of the community. Narrative legitimation can also take the form of an individual story. In the following example the student teacher employs a narrative genre in her posting (*Sabah, A critical incident from TP: The model lesson!!!!*) to relate the experience of losing her students because they were taken by a science teacher for two days to prepare a model lesson that was to be observed by a local education zone supervisor, i.e. inspector.

Contemplate this scene...

The poor English teacher (:" (me) goes into 4/2 classroom fully equipped with materials and worksheets to be met by 10 students out of 24 which is the total number of students. When she asked about the rest of the students she was told that they are 'rehearsing' the science lesson in the school resource center.

Having set the scene, Sabah then goes on to describe what she saw when she went to find her missing students:

She made the students memorize the answers to the questions she's going to ask during the 'model' lesson and gave them worksheets to answer. She even rehearsed facial expressions and gestures... She threatened the students that if they misbehaved or didn't follow the 'script' of the lesson, they would lose marks.

Sabah goes on, after relating more details of the event, to conclude the story and draw the moral implications:

After two days of 'rehearsal', the visitors came and the lesson was perfect, the students were perfect and everybody was smiling and happy. The poor English teacher was shocked and speechless and stunned and flabbergasted. She was also disappointed and thinking that there should be something to stop this madness and nonsense. The teacher is saying that lying, deceit and cheating are ok. Is this what we want our students to learn?

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It's a very self-conscious performance, reflected in the initial instruction to "contemplate this scene," the scare quotes around 'script' and 'rehearsal,' the ironic tone in the description of the 'happy,' 'smiling,' post-lesson scene, the cumulative build-up of adjectives to describe her reaction, the choice of vivid, colorful words like 'flabbergasted' and the use of the third person for the part of the author, the 'poor' English teacher. Humor plays an important part, uniting the audience in their common understandings and values through ridicule of the absurd perpetrators of the 'model lesson.' Additionally, the vivid description serves to create a sense of perceptual re-experience and to underline the writer's qualifications as an observer of verbatim reality (Edwards & Potter, 1992, p. 161). The overall discursive strategy is to build up a description of 'madness' and 'nonsense' that functions as a moral, cautionary tale. This moral evaluation becomes explicit in the student's summary of what has occurred as "lying, deceit and cheating," as well as in the concluding rhetorical question. The overall effect is an underlining of the beliefs of the community through a form of member checking that reinforces the common attunement of the community's values. Such legitimating of beliefs serves the ongoing co-constitution of the ideational and interpersonal meanings of the community, achieved through what Danielewicz (2001, p. 120) refers to as an "oppositional affiliation" in relation to the practices of UAE government schools.

In addition to these legitimation strategies, some students took on the role of maintaining and monitoring the community's beliefs and coherence through a strategy of agenda setting on behalf of the community. In a posting entitled 'Engaging environment' and addressed 'To all,' Sara begins with a reminder that as the completion of the degree approaches, "we have to keep in mind that this is the start, not the end." The categorical assertion of necessity ("we *have to* keep in mind") serves to remind members that this is not the time to be letting their guard down. This danger is made explicit when, after referencing many of the key tenets of the community's beliefs that should be part of their future classrooms such as "print-rich" environments that "build self esteem" and involve "student-centered activities," she reminds members that "the potential is there, to be influenced by traditional teachers who favor an audiolingual approach to teaching..." She then goes on to point out that the opportunity to improve practice, as the student teachers have constructed it, is clearly theirs for the taking. It's an extraordinary rallying cry:

Anyway, the onus will be on us, as the first batch of English teachers qualified from the HCT, to improve primary education throughout the country. Are we up to the challenge? You bet we are. Good luck and go forth with optimism and pride (we all have the potential to contribute successfully to the educational process in the UAE). Sara, *What I am looking forward to in my teaching career: Engaging environment*

The combination of moral pressure with assurances of capability is a potent mix. The message is all-inclusive – only first person plural pronouns are used. And the bar is set very high – the student teachers are to "improve primary education throughout the country" even though they will only be responsible for one aspect of the curriculum and their number is relatively small. Taken together, these aspects provide another example of the community constructing itself in opposition to a system in need of reconstruction.

The powerful coherence among community members that we have seen fostered through these discursive strategies has been at the expense of an 'otherization' of the community of school teachers. The strength of the common bonds achieved through the use of inclusive forms of address among community members, as well as through the ongoing maintenance and monitoring work of continual legitimation of the community's beliefs, serves to delineate and unite the community, while defining it against the constitutive outside of the teaching community in the government schools. In the next section we will examine the contours and dynamics of the processes at work in the community's discursive construction, drawing together the findings of the study and considering some of the implications in terms of teacher education in the local and regional context, as well as outlining some possibilities for further research.

Interpretation and Implications for Further Research

In many ways, from the perspective of a teacher educator, the strength of the students' educational voices and the intensity of their personal and professional vision and commitment at the individual and the community level are very pleasing to see. Furthermore, their determination to be agents of change is both unsurprising, given the dissatisfaction of most of the student teachers with their own schooling, and welcome, given the UAE's avowed ambitions in terms of school reform. But, as has been highlighted on a number of occasions in the preceding discussion, this strength of commitment and belief has been built through a discursive strategy of constructing an oppositional affiliation with regard to the government schools and teachers, which at times spills over into hostility and antagonism.

In considering the ways the students' construction of their teaching identities and their community of practice reflect the wider social discourses operating in the contemporary UAE, there are some clear connections. The students' embrace of educational change and modern pedagogy resonates with the progressive discourse of positioning the UAE advantageously in the global economy. However, this is not just a matter of their being colonized by discourses of education emanating from the 'West.' Consonant with Urry's (2003) notion of 'glocalization,' the students are keen to use educational theory and global English creatively for local purposes. Likewise, in thinking about the particular strength of the student teachers' community of practice, discourses of Emiratization and national development may be part of the explanation, though also relevant here no doubt is the minority status of Emiratis in the UAE (where they comprise only 20% of the population), since the sense of fragility this engenders adds further impetus towards emphasizing constructed ethnic and national differences as a means of establishing distinctions. These are fairly obvious and straightforward connections that can be drawn. We can gain further insights into the dynamic at work here from Discourse Theory.

Discourse and Differentiation

We have discussed discourse as a particular pattern of signifying practices that structure meaning from the "riot of inchoate potential messages" (Holquist, 1990, p. 47) that otherwise comprises 'reality.' That is, discourse involves taking a partial and contingent 'cut' or 'take' on 'reality' from the myriad of other possible 'cuts.' In a similar fashion, discursive processes of identity and community construction involve a 'closure' of meaning, in that individual and community are constructed in particular contingent and temporary ways. This contingent and temporary fixing

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of meaning necessarily ‘closes off’ and excludes other possible meanings that might be available within the realm of possible meanings. For example, dividing the world of teachers and teaching into the ‘traditional’ and ‘new’ paradigms tends to foreclose possible alternatives, such as the ‘eclectic’ or ‘pragmatic’ teacher. We can best understand the essential dynamic operating here in the discursive construction of the students’ identities and their community by considering Laclau and Mouffe’s (1985) logics of equivalence and difference.

Within Discourse Theory, meaning focuses around “logics of equivalences” and “logics of differences”; however, these are not given or fixed (Andersen, 2003; Howarth, 2000; Torfing, 1999). We may see a ‘Mercedes’ and a ‘BMW’ car as different or we may see them as equivalent in their difference from a ‘Ford’; which logic prevails depends on context and purpose, and is the very stuff of politics. In a similar fashion, an Emirati student teacher may see herself as equivalent to an expatriate Egyptian teacher insofar as they are both non-western, Arabic speakers and fellow professionals in the field of UAE education; or she may focus on her UAE nationality as a source of distinction and difference. The logic of equivalence will strive to delimit and dissolve difference by creating “chains of equivalence”; yet because meaning and identity are necessarily differential, the operation of a logic of equivalence is always operationalized through the construction of a purely negative opposite. An extreme example of this is the Jacobin discourse in the French Revolution, which simplified differences by dividing society into the ‘people’ and the ‘ancien regime’ (Torfing, 1999, p. 97)—or more recently, United States President George W. Bush’s claim that you are either ‘with us or against us’. By contrast, the ‘logic of difference’ will strive to break chains of equivalence, thereby weakening oppositions and downplaying division. Howarth (2000, p. 107) offers the apartheid regime with its ideology of separate development, organized around expanding differentiations among social groups, yet at the same time resistant to the construction of chains of equivalence between apartheid and anti-apartheid forces, as the classic example of the logic of difference in operation.

As we have seen, for the student teachers’ community, meaning revolves around a constructed opposition between ‘traditional’ and ‘new’ or ‘progressive’ teaching. Though necessarily temporary and contingent, these particular constructions have achieved a degree of naturalization, becoming hegemonic among the community members. The individual and community identities involved are built up through ‘chains of equivalence’ between elements of ‘new’ or ‘progressive’ teaching. These elements include teacher as ‘facilitator,’ and practicing ‘student-centred’ teaching within a ‘complex’ classroom environment that values ‘high motivation’ and ‘active learning’ and prizes ‘sensitivity’ towards learners, who are recognized as having varied ‘learning needs’ and individual ‘learning styles.’ The meaning of these elements is dependent upon their opposites (“transmitter,” “teacher-centered” etc.) that also form a chain of equivalence. This opposite chain serves to distinguish the students from the government school teachers, as we saw above, by comprising the ‘constitutive outside’ that offers the condition of possibility for construction of the identities in question (Torfing, 1999, p. 124). That is, the meanings that make up the student teachers’ identities are established relationally by being equated with some, and contrasted with other, key signifiers. Within this discursive construction of hegemonic meaning and identities, the two chains of equivalence are mutually exclusive, in that it is impossible to be a ‘new’ and a ‘traditional’ teacher at the same time, or for the

classroom to be a site of both ‘new’ and ‘traditional’ teaching. As a consequence of this pattern the ‘traditional’ teachers are constructed as – and resented for – ‘blocking’ the full fruition of the student teachers’ identities as ‘new’ teachers (Howarth, 2000, p. 106-7).

In addition to this antagonism, another possible consequence of the hegemonic status of the discourse of ‘new’ teaching is likely to be a degree of blindness towards elements of the excluded ‘traditional’ discourse that may be present in their practice, since logically this is impossible within the possibilities for meaning defined by the chain of equivalence. Thus, given the persistence of this theme, it is important to ask what might be possible reasons for, as well as implications of, its predominance, both for the subjects of the study and for possible future research. I address these issues in the section below.

Interpreting the Research Findings

Overall it is not surprising to see a degree of commitment along with agreement and consensus among the students. Part of the process of establishing a community of practice is establishing and maintaining the belief systems that define the community. As Miller Marsh (2003) notes: “In order to attain membership in a given group, an individual must appropriate one or more of the discourses that flow in and through the community... As individuals become immersed in social communities, they appropriate the ways of thinking, speaking, and interacting that provide them access to group membership” (p. 7).

Still the question remains as to why the students have been so powerfully receptive to discourses of progressive education, which are so at odds with the ‘traditional’ schooling they themselves experienced in the past. Given their strong protective feelings towards their own culture and the gap between progressive educational theory and current practice in local schools, a reasonably anticipated reaction might have been of scepticism and even rejection. One obvious factor in the students’ positive embrace of what we have described as ‘new’ approaches to education, is their immersion in them as part of a teacher education program that models this progressive pedagogy. It may also be that the ‘missionistic’ rhetoric that underpins progressive approaches maps readily onto the mission and rhetoric of nation-building that is part of the Emiratization project. Youthful naivety may play a role too.

But another possible insight into what the processes at work here might be is offered by the findings of a recent study with Jewish and Arab teacher education students in Israel. In this study, Eilam (2003) relates the powerful uptake of theory on the part of the Arab students and speculates on the reasons underlying their strong confidence in the ability to relate theory to practice: “The Arab educational milieu, which traditionally involves firm discipline and grants teachers high status and respect, may have encouraged Muslim Arab students to believe more in their ability to successfully apply what they had learned” (p. 180). The eager, wholehearted acceptance of progressive theory coupled with, indeed intensified by, criticism of their own schooling resonates with findings in Eilam’s earlier study: “The difficulties the Arabs had experienced in learning made them invest much more energy into making sense of and trying to apply the new knowledge” (Eilam, 2002, p. 1695). Harold, McNally and McAskil (2002, p. 7) reported a similar “impact of academic course content” on teacher education students at Zayed University in the UAE.

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Thus, in line with both these studies, it can be argued that the students are now so critical of their schooling because pedagogically it was at odds with the approaches to education they have encountered in the HCT's B.Ed. degree. But ironically, it may also be that the students' backgrounds in a "teacher-centred" milieu may contribute to their ready acceptance of "student-centred" approaches. We should be wary, however, of reading their penchant for dichotomous schemata as unique to this context. In their work with teacher education students in North America, Hinchman and Oyler noted a rejection of ambiguity and a "desire not only for stability but also for what we called Utopian harmony" (Hinchman & Oyler, 2000, p. 503). The authors acknowledge the function of dichotomies in reducing the tensions inherent in uncertainty, but argue that teacher educators

must also help students to understand that the importance of the issue is not necessarily diminished by the fact that disagreements are not readily resolved... that the same data generates multiple interpretations... that there are not many universal prescriptions for teaching. (Hinchman & Oyler, 2000, p. 506-7)

Drawing on Rorty's notion of the liberal ironist (1989), Hinchman and Oyler urge teacher educators to cultivate an appreciation of contingencies, contradictions and ironies in student teachers, so as to guard against susceptibility to overly coherent constructions of pedagogical 'reality.' In Mitchell and Sackney's (2000) terms, the spirit of advocacy needs to be balanced at all times by a spirit of inquiry. Such an approach would view educational theory ideas not so much as a source of truth, but rather from a perspective whereby "...theory effectively becomes a tool kit that offers different ways of analyzing and theorizing social and cultural phenomena and practices" (Weedon, 2004, p. 9).

But assuming for the sake of argument that the progressive educational discourses are in the interests of UAE education, three issues immediately suggest themselves in relation to the future. The first relates to the practical difficulties the students are likely to face in trying to bridge the gulf between the practices that characterize their beliefs and the practices currently predominating in government schools. The second relates to the potential struggle to maintain their current beliefs that the students are likely to face as they take up roles within an environment and a set of practices predicated upon a different and contrary set of educational beliefs. And the third relates to the challenges they are likely to encounter in working alongside the teachers in those schools, given the construction of antagonistic relations in the predominant discourse of the student teachers' community of practice that we have observed. These are topics warranting further research; however, in the following section I consider some initial strategies that might assist future cohorts of student teachers in moving beyond an antagonistic model.

From Antagonism to Agonism

A situation of hostility between student teachers and government school teachers is unlikely to be in the interests of either party. It also runs the risk of fusing with other constructed differences such as that between Emirati nationals and expatriate Arabs, leading to situations of mutual resentment and the entrenching of oppositional stances which will obstruct possibilities for cooperation and collaboration. Additionally it is worth noting that a sustained pattern of

negative, antagonistic expression towards government schools and teachers is not a healthy state of affairs for the student teachers themselves; as Mitchell and Sackney (2000, p. 139) note, “when we direct negativity towards another person, we are injecting it into our own lives, and when we respect others, respect shall return to us.”

One way to surmount the latent and sometimes explicit antagonism that we have seen in the discourse of the student teachers’ community of practice is to promote what Mouffe (2000) describes as an *agonistic* approach, which “acknowledges the real nature of its frontiers and the forms of exclusion they entail, instead of trying to disguise them under the veil of rationality or morality” (p. 105). Yet while antagonism entails an us/them relation in which those we disagree with are our ‘enemies,’ agonism sees them transformed into ‘adversaries’ whose legitimacy is accepted (p. 20). This would entail moving beyond characterizations of teaching as good and bad, but rather, seeing education and schools, teachers and students, teaching and learning, within a wider sociodiscursive perspective. A few students moved towards such a position as they tentatively challenged the frontiers established by the community’s predominant discourse:

On the other hand, I want to draw your attention to another issue. We were taught how to create a positive learning environment and we got the chance to see the effectiveness of using child-centred activities through going out to schools and teaching. We were introduced to many educational theories and got the opportunities to put them into practice. Government schools teachers did not get that chance though. *Asiya, Insights from the Internship: Re: What is an effective learning environment in views of the principal and teachers in the school?!*

Here Asiya recognizes the contingency of the community’s discourse, which allows her to evince empathy with the government teachers rather than constructing them in adversarial terms. This insight is related to an aspect of agonism, in the form of *nomadization*, which “refers to the attempt to undercut the allegiance of a specific identity to a certain place or a certain property, and thereby to show that all identities are constructed in and through hegemonic power struggles” (Torfing, 1999, p. 255). This emphasis on developing awareness of the discursive construction of all identities resonates with Gee’s recent urging of the need for language teachers to become “masters” of the “political geography of discourses” (Gee, 2004, p. 30). The implication of this is the need for teacher education programs in general, and the HCT B.Ed. in particular, to encourage student teachers to develop an awareness of the ways in which their own understanding is continuously being constructed in and through discourse and to see in turn the constructed-ness of the government teachers’ understandings. To turn to a religious discourse, we could say that to understand is to forgive.

In terms of practice with future cohorts of student teachers, one possible approach for promoting such an empathetic understanding of the government school teachers would be to implement strategies such as having the students complete a detailed profile of one of their supervising school teachers. This could include documenting issues like why they chose teaching, how and what they studied to become a teacher, their career path to date, their goals for the future and their concerns about teaching and education in the UAE in relation to both their own work and the educational wellbeing of students. The latter points would position the government school

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teachers as knowledgeable and concerned professionals who have a vision of how education might be improved. This in turn might serve to complicate the student teachers' dominant and somewhat one-dimensional view of the government school teachers as guardians of 'traditional' teaching and obstacles to change. The earlier points might help the student teachers gain insights into the struggles faced by expatriate teachers, on tenuous one-year contracts, paid half the salary of UAE national teachers and with limited options in their home country. This might assist in helping the student teachers' community acknowledge what Mouffe (2000) refers to as the "the real nature of its frontiers and the forms of exclusion they entail" (p. 105) in order to move beyond "the veil of rationality or morality" that constructs the 'problems' of UAE education in purely pedagogical, rather than political, terms.

Another element of agonism that offers the potential to move beyond the oppositional impasse is the promotion of an understanding of *hybridity* – of the multiple elements comprising our identities – to enable student teachers to focus upon what they have in common with the school teachers as women, as professionals, as Arabic speakers etc., rather than only seeing differences. By resisting closure, hybridity resists the construction of the 'other' as merely the constitutive outside or as the negative side of a binary opposition and thus entails continual openness towards an 'other' who, like the 'self,' is necessarily heterogeneous. Again, strategies such as the profiling sketched above, along with others directed towards the creation of a learning community embracing student teachers, college teachers and school teachers, might assist the student teachers in resisting the temptation to reduce the government school teachers to the 'other' of 'bad,' 'traditional' or 'teacher-centered' teachers but rather to see all educators in the context of wider social, cultural, economic and political structures and pressures that position them in particular ways.

Through fostering a critical engagement with the cultural and political, as well as pedagogical, narratives that construct teachers' worldviews, such strategies might thus allow for a re-imagining of both the student teachers and the school teachers and might assist future student teachers in moving beyond the oppositional framework we have seen emerging. Together these elements of an agonistic politics could potentially encourage students to view the teachers in terms of what unites rather than what divides them and to look from a position of shared empathy for common sources of inspiration for action and collaboration. Implementing, monitoring and evaluating the success of strategies to promote this agonistic approach would be a valuable topic for further research.

Conclusion

Overall, this paper has offered a way of thinking about teacher formation as a dynamic process of identity development within a community of practice. Drawing on the insights of discourse theory, the paper has recognized the inescapably political nature of meaning and the influence of social structures in the development of community and identity – of student teachers' voice and vision – while also suggesting some potential strategies for addressing the antagonistic relations of meaning to which the logic of equivalence may give rise. The relevance and applicability of this differential discursive dynamic to other teacher education contexts would be an interesting and worthwhile subject for further research, as would the playing out of the implications

discussed above in the UAE, once the graduates of the HCT B.Ed. program establish themselves in UAE schools. Additionally, the paper has afforded insights into the ongoing processes of educational development in a country that is part of an under-researched region of the world, but one that is often subject to stereotyping and caricature, and has suggested some possible directions for future research to provide greater understanding of teacher education in the UAE and elsewhere. Such research may offer further insights into the processes at work in the discursive construction of student teachers as part of a community of practice.

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The Common European Framework of Reference and its Influence on Language Teacher Education

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Introduction: The Common European Framework

In the 1990s, the Council of Europe¹ (CEF), more specifically its Language Policy Division in Strasbourg, provided funding for the creation and publication of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching and assessment*, or CEF (Council of Europe, 2001). The general purposes of this document are to make language instruction and assessment more oriented to the goals shared by the educational systems in all the member states, and more transparent in order to facilitate European mobility. The English translation was published in 2001, and the document is now available in several European languages. CEF concepts are also used as the basis for the European Language Portfolio (ELP), perhaps a better-known document issued in 2001 by the Language Policy Division to provide “a format in which language learning and intercultural experiences of most diverse kinds can be recorded and formally recognised” (CEF, 2001, p. 5; see also below).

CEF is an ambitious enterprise. I will detail four key aspects of the CEF to orient the reader to this complex document. First, its primary specific purpose is to define and describe in detail what knowing a language means. Therefore, in it, the four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) have been divided into 53 competences, as well as into the general competences (declarative knowledge, sociocultural knowledge, and intercultural awareness), skills and know-how (*savoir-faire*), and “existential” competence (*savoir-être*). CEF (Council of Europe, 2001) defines this existential competence as:

the sum of the individual characteristics, personality traits and attitudes which concern, for example, self-image and one’s view of others and willingness to engage with other people in social interaction. This type of competence is not seen simply as resulting from immutable characteristics. It includes factors which are the product of various kinds of acculturation and may be modified. (pp. 11-12)²

¹ At the very outset, a fundamental distinction has to be kept in mind between the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe. As of June 2005, the EU has 25 members, whereas the Council of Europe consists of 44 member states. The Council of Europe concentrates on education and cultural issues.

² Existential competence is an important concept also in the CEF definition of the ability to learn (*savoir apprendre*) because this ability “mobilizes existential competence, declarative knowledge and skills and draws on various types of competence.” In CEF, existential competence is regarded very important in learning languages, “Existential competence: e.g. a willingness to take initiatives or even risks in face-to-face communication. So as to afford oneself the opportunity to speak, to prompt assistance from people with whom one is speaking, such as asking them to rephrase what they have said in simpler terms, etc; also listening skills, attention to what is said, heightened awareness of the risks of cultural misunderstanding in relation with others.”

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Second, for assessment and self-assessment purposes, these competences are classified into six main skill levels ranging from A1 (break-through) to C2 (mastery). In some cases, these six levels were felt to lack specificity, so that, with reference to the competence category “Reports and essays” for example, B1 has been subdivided into B1.1 and B1.2 (p. 62). On the other hand, the top or bottom competence levels for some descriptors are missing. Thus, for the competence category “Reading for Orientation,” the highest achievable level is B2 (CEF, p. 70); while for “Reports and essays,” the lowest described level is B1.1 (CEF, p. 62).

Thirdly, since knowing a language is seen as using language in everyday life, CEF also lists language domains, i.e. various contexts where language is used. This listing is the most extensive I have ever encountered, but it pays practically no attention to languages for specific purposes (LSP). If it had, it would have had to include endless lists of, e.g., professionally oriented and work-related domains.

A fourth aspect of CEF is that it takes into account the personalities of language users, not only as effective and responsible language learners and communicators but also as people who are culturally aware and respect other languages and cultures (cf. general competences, skills and know-how, and “existential” competence mentioned above).

Even though CEF covers very many aspects of language teaching, learning, and assessment, the Council of Europe views it as a work in progress. Actually, modifications are encouraged when the need arises. The significance of CEF is that it provides a standard framework for language studies; it is intended to serve as the basis for national interpretations, as can be seen in programs that have already been implemented in several countries.

Having seen to it that CEF is available in several languages, the Council of Europe is now supporting many international training programs for language teachers. In addition to these international courses, meetings and symposia, the national boards of education in several member states are providing their own training, as are various educational institutions, such as universities.

In the advertisement for a publication entitled *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching and assessment – Case studies*, published in 2002 (www.coe.int/lang May 2005), the Council of Europe states that, “the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages has been widely adopted in setting curriculum standards, designing courses, developing materials and in assessment and certification.” That is, in fact, the general view. In this paper, I will give a concrete example of why and how CEF has influenced language teacher education in Finland, a member of the Council of Europe. I will also briefly discuss some problems and future prospects.

The Case of Finland

In Finland, the National Board of Education (NBE), working under the Ministry of Education, makes decisions concerning the curricula for schools (grades 1-12), polytechnics and vocational schools (pre-school or kindergarten is in Finland regarded as part of the daycare system, and its curricula are only recommendations). The NBE co-ordinates reforms and publishes reports, and it often takes the responsibility for training teachers in new educational areas or methodologies. For several decades, the NBE has been publishing framework curricula for grades 1-12. These curricula have an official status, and all schools must follow them.

The universities are directly under the Ministry of Education. All the universities are so-called “state universities” that are mostly funded by the government through the Ministry of Education budget. Language instruction in the universities is of two kinds. Undergraduate or graduate students who major or minor in languages study in language departments in the Faculty of Humanities. However, in Finland it is impossible to graduate from any university without having fulfilled obligatory language requirements in at least two languages: the second national language (for most students Swedish) and one foreign language (for most students English). All of these students who are non-language majors are taught in Language Centres, which are separate institutes within the universities with their own staff and faculty. While also all universities of technology have their own language centers, some smaller universities, such as the University of Industrial Arts and the Theatre Academy, have a co-operation pact with a university language centre in the vicinity, in this case the University of Helsinki Language Centre, that provides their language instruction and assessment.

In order to become a qualified language teacher in Finland, one has to have a Master's degree with the language in question as the major or the minor, and one has to have completed teacher training, which takes place in the university-run normal schools. Finnish universities have had no specific requirements for teacher training. Whereas research qualifications often override teaching qualifications in university language departments, the focus is different in Language Centres because they are mainly seen as institutes of instruction and not research. Teacher training is now being developed in the universities in general, but the Language Centres have been training their teachers since the 1970s.

In the earlier curricula for school second and foreign language instruction, the NBE had defined the objectives (divided into general and school-level specific) with descriptors in many ways similar to those in CEF. However, these descriptors remained vague because they were not tied to any skill levels defined anywhere.

Reasons for Implementing CEF

As with the implementation of so many other fine educational ideas and methodologies, things start to happen at the national level only when there is political backing and funding. Educationalists had had strong opinions both for and against CEF, and academic discussions had been going on until the Ministry of Education decided in 1997 what criteria should be used in the future core curricula and mandated that CEF criteria should be used in language instruction in the Finnish education system. At that point, it became the task of the National Board of Education (NBE) to see to it that CEF was used in curriculum design and certification.

The pioneering work was done some years ago when the assessment scales of the National Language Certificate (NLC), administered by the NBE, were modified to match the CEF scales. Finland's polytechnic language teachers were the first group of language teachers involved in the analysis of the scales because they were the first to receive official CEF training. This was a natural decision because polytechnics are newcomers in the Finnish educational system, most of them having been officially established less than 20 years ago.

Once the NBE had officially ratified the national core curricula for all the elementary, junior high and high schools on the basis of the CEF scales, it became unavoidable that CEF would play an important role in language teacher training. The following example from the core curricula not only clearly shows the impact of CEF on the texts of the descriptions, but also illustrates the precision of the NBE's formulations:

Grades 3-6

The task of the instruction is to accustom the pupil to communicating in the foreign language in very concrete, personally immediate situations, at first orally for the most part, then gradually increasing the written communication. The pupil is to realize that languages and cultures are different, but not different in value. The pupil must develop good language study habits.

Objectives

Language Proficiency

The pupils will

1. learn to relate basic information about themselves as individuals, and their immediate circles, and to communicate in the target language in simple everyday speaking situations, depending on the aid of an interlocutor when necessary
2. come to understand the main content of speech or text dealing with day-to-day life and routine events, with the support of a situational connection
3. learn to write short messages in the most familiar, predictable situations associated with day-to-day needs and experiences.

Cultural Skills

The pupils will

1. get to know the culture of the target language and will gain a preliminary introduction to the similarities and differences between that culture and Finnish culture
2. learn to communicate with representatives of the target language culture in everyday situations, in a manner natural to that culture.

Learning strategies

The pupils will learn to

1. function responsibly and enterprisingly in language-learning situations
2. exploit one-on-one and small-group situations in language learning
3. use a textbook, a dictionary, and other information acquisition tools independently
4. use new words and structures in their own output
5. recognize their own strengths and weaknesses as language learners, and to evaluate their work and language skills in different areas, in relation to the objectives.

Core Contents

1. situations and subject areas from the perspectives of the language regions of the pupil's language and the language being studied
2. the immediate environment and the persons, things and functions that form essential parts of it, such as home and family members
3. school, schoolmates, and teachers
4. rural and urban living
5. leisure-time functions associated with the age group
6. doing business in various situations
7. basic knowledge of one's own culture and the culture of the target language, possibly including the target language culture in Finland, depending on the language.

Structures

1. main grammatical principles peculiar to the language in question, from the standpoint of communication
2. the writing system of the target language when necessary.

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Communication Strategies

1. recognizing the main ideas in speech or written text
2. finding specific information in a spoken communication or text
3. planning one's messages
4. relying on non-verbal communication and an interlocutor's help in oral interactive situations
5. relying on written aids in producing and interpreting text. (NCCBE, 2004, pp. 138-140)

At the end of elementary school, i.e. the sixth grade (ages 12-13), good language proficiency in English, according to the CEF proficiency scales, is described in the following way: The pupils should be on level A2.1 in listening comprehension, A1.3 in speech, A2.1 in text comprehension, and A1.3 in writing (see Appendix). In addition to having achieved good language proficiency, the pupils are expected to have cultural skills and to have mastered language learning strategies, "to become accustomed to evaluating their own work" (p. 141), among other things.

In the same way, the objectives and core contents are specified for grades 7-9. For pupils who receive the grade of 8 (approximately the grade of "B" in the U.S. school system) in English in the ninth grade, their language proficiency must be B1.1 in listening comprehension, A2.2 in speech, B1.1 in text comprehension and A2.2 in writing (see Appendix). In other words, they have to be more advanced in receptive than in productive skills. The goal for cultural skills is that "the pupils will know about the way of life in, and the history of, the target language's language region" (p.143). As to learning strategies, "the pupils will make regular use of working approaches effective from the standpoint of language study and learning," and they will "have realized the importance of the persistent communication practice essential to language study" (p. 143).

Since elementary, junior high and high schools as well as polytechnics were applying CEF as their backbone in language instruction, it comes as no surprise that since the fall of 2005, all university language centers have been using the CEF scales in their prospectuses to describe their language courses and tests. In other words, all of the language instruction and assessment in Finland is now officially based on CEF in one form or another.

The next question to tackle is how this is taken into account in language teacher training.

Changes in Teacher Training

In order to describe more accurately how CEF has impacted language teacher training, it is useful to take a look at the current requirements for teacher training (in MA or one-year post-baccalaureate programs) and in-service teacher training. We will start with the training given to school language teachers.

Finland's teacher training institutes (always situated within universities) use CEF materials extensively in their instruction. Future teachers are tested on parts of CEF in written

examinations, but the obligatory assessment and evaluation courses are more important because they train future language teachers in the use and interpretation of the CEF scales. Real-life materials are used, especially videos of oral production, and sample tests are analyzed and graded in class. The purpose is, of course, to train new teachers to use CEF as a tool in their own work.

In interpreting the CEF scales, Charles Alderson's catch phrase, "Is your B1 my B1?" (Takala, 2004), is still the core question. In other words, do language teachers understand and use the descriptors in the CEF scales in the same way? Here, a lot of negotiation and renegotiation is required, for the scales contain terms like "fairly well," "slower and clearer than normal," "some detailed everyday information." The vagueness of the scales in terms of number, amount, relation, comparison and level needs to be replaced by some clear definitions. A class attended by future language teachers is a good place to get started on this daunting task, but there should be at least national agreement on the descriptors, as is the case at many levels of education in Finland today. To make these negotiations more concrete, supplementary CEF materials as well as European Language Portfolio materials are used. The NBE has provided CEF scales that have been specifically modified for use in the Finnish school system (see Appendix), using 'can do' statements. Additional information has been provided by SUKOL (the Finnish language teachers' association), which arranges meetings, symposia and courses and publishes a journal called TEMPUS. Even though the ELP is not the main focus of this paper, a couple of words have to be said about it in order to clarify the differences between it and CEF.

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) is younger than CEF. "It was developed and piloted by the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, from 1998 until 2000. It was launched on a pan-European level during the European Year of Languages [2001] as a tool to support the development of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism" (<http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/portfolio/>). This portfolio has three parts: a biography, a language passport, and a dossier, and each part has a different scope. The language passport is a document in which all of the student's official achievements are recorded, including school grades. The biography is in many ways a learner diary the students write about themselves—in my opinion, a better name for it would be "autobiography"—and the dossier is a collection of samples of language production, usually assembled by the students themselves. The Finnish adaptations used in the schools were developed by Prof. Viljo Kohonen at the University of Tampere, and are in wide use in grades 1-12. (More information about the ELP can be found, e.g., at <http://www.eelp.org/eportfolio/index.html>) In language teacher training, the ELP is discussed, and training is given in its use. The University of Tampere, SUKOL, and the NBE have also been actively organizing courses for teachers to use the ELP because it is such a student-centered tool and increases students' commitment to their own language studies. The difference between the ELP and CEF is that every language teacher has the right to use or not to use the whole ELP or parts of it, whereas language instruction must be based on CEF, and the use of its descriptors is mandatory.

SUKOL and the National Board of Education are very active in providing in-service CEF training for language teachers, the only exception being the universities, which function directly under the Ministry of Education. Through SUKOL and the NBE, the language teachers in the polytechnics and the schools proper are and have been involved in pan-European CEF training. The universities have been on their own.

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Some years ago, the directors of all the university language centers launched a project on language and communication (KIEVI in Finnish, LANGCOM in English), one purpose of which was to organize national in-service training for language center teachers who had already had some CEF training in their local language centers. The University of Helsinki Language Center CEF Committee, chaired by the author, has been in charge of these national training days. We have followed a four-step procedure for in-service training outlined by Johanna Panthier, Director of the Language Policy Division in the Council of Europe (Takala, 2004), among others. These four steps are: 1) getting familiar with CEF, 2) agreeing on the specifications and descriptors in the scales, 3) making a test together, and 4) standardizing the test. So far, we have completed steps 1 and 2.

Language teachers from all the university language centers were asked to read Chapters 6 and 7 of the CEF prior to attending the first training day. At the training session, each teacher was given an envelope that contained the separated descriptors of 6 scales. These descriptors were taken directly from the CEF manual but had only randomized numbers (nothing to show what level they were). Included in the signum, the different number and letter cluster on each slip, was a number indicating the scale or the competency in question so that it was easy to see what descriptors belonged together. Then, working independently, each teacher decided what level the particular descriptors belonged to and then placed the descriptors into the six boxes provided with labels A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2, i.e. the CEF levels. During the lunch break, the training group skimmed through the descriptors, separating those that were in the right box from the wrong ones. After the break, all the participants, according to their own interests, went into six groups, each dealing with one CEF scale level. (The teachers who start teaching a language from the very beginning in the university are naturally more interested in lower proficiency levels, whereas those who teach advanced language courses need the upper proficiency levels.) Now their task was to analyze why the wrong descriptors were where they were. This entailed finding some rationale in the misplaced descriptors, discussing them and giving a short report to the others. The participants were also at liberty to disagree with the proficiency scales, but in those cases they were to give solid arguments for why they did not agree and perhaps even to suggest new descriptors. Although a whole day was dedicated to this training, there was not enough time to create the new descriptors many felt were necessary. The case was made that especially the LSP courses needed more attention—not only nationally but also internationally.

A second national training day was arranged so that teachers of the same language were brought together. Their homework for the day was to review the proficiency scales (and bring them along if they so wished) as well as bring a test with a student's answers from their own language center. The basic purpose of this second training day was 1) to make teachers familiar with each other's testing for the same language requirements, and 2)—even more importantly—to discuss, agree on and create a list of descriptors for various proficiency levels. This would make the grades of transfer students much more transparent and would facilitate finding the appropriate level for the incoming student to continue his or her language studies.

The second training day also appeared to be successful in making teachers discuss, compare, and analyze each other's methods of assessment, and there was wide agreement on descriptors even though no group had enough time to really list the descriptors to be used. When, however,

at the end of the day the possibilities of additional future training were discussed, no group felt the need to create a test together. It was generally felt that it was enough to be familiar with one another's testing and assessment and that the academic autonomy of Finnish university language teachers would be infringed upon a common test were to be created and used. It was felt that the next step should be to discuss the CEF proficiency scales with our European colleagues.

Problems and Future Prospects

Even though university language teachers are used to dealing with various scales, including TOEFL (the Test of English as a Foreign Language), IELTS (International English Language Testing System), DAF (Deutsch als Fremdsprache), DELF (Diplôme d'Études en Langue Française), DALF (Diplôme Approfondi en Langue Française), and NLC (the Finnish National Language Certificate), and assessing and testing their students, the mere idea of grappling with yet another set of scales is difficult—we have known about CEF for a few years now. Some of us are already asking our students to use DIALANG (www.dialang.org), a free self-assessment program that adults can use to test their language skills in several European languages. With the aid of this program, we can help our students use this information when they plan their language studies. The main problem is to decide to what extent all university language instruction should be based on CEF or whether our instruction should only take CEF into account. So far, there is no agreement on this.

Another difficulty lies in the very nature of CEF, which does not specifically recognize advanced university language studies. Many of the university language courses in Finland are devoted to Language for Specific Purposes (LSP), which has been totally left out of the CEF structure. The general idea is that CEF scales should be modified to fit the situation, but it is not wise to start something so extensive in one country, let alone in one institution. Although language teachers in schools and polytechnics have already had a lot of international contacts, language teachers at Finnish universities are just beginning to reach out.

A convenient opportunity to invite foreign colleagues to Finland was provided when the University of Helsinki decided to arrange an international conference entitled “Bi- and Multilingual Universities” in September 2005. About 100 participants from universities all over Europe attended our pre-conference CEF workshop. The program of this workshop consisted of reports by the participants on how CEF is being applied in their various home universities, what problems have arisen and what co-operation is needed. Consideration was given to forming an international working group to create proficiency scales for LSP under the auspices of CercleS, the European Society of Language Centers.

It remains to be seen how much can be achieved. But it is quite clear that, at least for the foreseeable future, CEF is and will be the main pedagogical and philosophical framework for language teaching, learning and assessment in Europe.

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Appendix

Important Council of Europe Resources Online

The Council of Europe: <http://coe.int>

The Council of Europe Language Policy Division: <http://www.coe.int/lang>

The European Language Portfolio (ELP): <http://coe.int/portfolio>

An on-line self-assessment program for adult language learners in 14 languages: <http://www.dialang.org>

Manual for Relating Examinations to the Common European Framework, ed.by Sauli Takala, 2004:
<http://www.ealta.eu.org/conference/2004/ppt/takala14may.ppt>

EAQUALS-ALTE ePortfolio/l'eportfolio d'EAQUALS-ALTE (downloadable language portfolio on line with instructions for teachers and teacher trainees):

<http://www.eelp.org/eportfolio/index.html>

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Engaging With Tertiary Content Teachers About Students' Language Needs

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Introduction

The changing nature of the student body in universities throughout the English-speaking world and the internationalisation of the tertiary education sector bring a new dimension to teaching. Linguistic diversity is now often the norm in many tertiary classes, and this entails a need for content teachers to develop additional skills. Content teachers at tertiary level need to acknowledge the key role that language plays in learning (Asmar, 2003; Ballard & Clanchy, 1988, 1997; Biggs, 1994; Carrasquillo & Rodrigues, 2002; Cortazzi & Jin, 1997; Gibbons, 2003; Thomas, 2002). It is my contention in this paper that collaboration between content teachers and language teacher educators leads to more effective teaching in today's tertiary classes by providing content teachers with an understanding of the central role of language in learning.

Today, teachers can no longer assume that students have mastered the conventions of academic discourse by the time they reach degree level programs. All students, and language minority students in particular (Snow, 1997), will benefit from guidance in academic discourse. Two different approaches address this issue: an academic literacies approach (Lea & Street, 1998) and a content-based instruction approach (Crandall & Kaufman, 2002). Much has been written about the theory of academic literacies (Lea & Street, 1998; Paltridge, 2002; Reid, Kirkpatrick, & Mulligan, 1998) and the language needs of tertiary students (ICAS, 2002; ; Zamel, 1998) but there is less literature focusing on the professional development that tertiary content teachers require in order to promote student language development (Cartwright & Noone, 2000; Horowitz, 1986; Snow & Kamhi-Stein, 1996). Cartwright & Noone (2000) explore a model for teaching disciplinary discourse which involves language teacher educators collaborating with content teachers to focus on generic skills for promoting academic literacy in all disciplines. In the present study, the collaboration with the content teachers focuses on one program in the Faculty of Business, and the discussion is informed by evidence about the students' language needs.

The interdisciplinary collaboration in this case study evolved from a series of one-to-one consultations with teachers which aimed at helping them understand their students' language needs. As a language teacher educator, I later sought feedback from the teachers about their learning in the collaborative process. It is their reactions to learning how to promote student language skills that I will report on here. The discussion of the outcomes of the collaborative work between me, as language teacher educator, and the content teachers will be framed in the context of the scholarship of teaching. I argue that in developing a culture of scholarly teaching institute-wide, universities could encourage content teachers to accept their responsibility for promoting student language development.

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In this paper I summarize the context of my work in New Zealand, then outline my role as a language teacher educator working with content teachers to find out the language needs of their students. I describe the consultation process I implemented to disseminate the findings to the teachers and then discuss the action research study I undertook to evaluate the impact of these consultations.

Institutional Context

At the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) in New Zealand approximately 30% of the student population use English as an additional language (EAL). This diverse student group consists of migrants, refugees and international students, many of whom struggle in some way to acquire the complex language skills required in tertiary study. Since 2001, the university has had a language policy undertaking to support all students in the development of their academic literacy skills. As a consequence, the university is committed to providing the necessary professional development that content teachers need to support their students in acquiring disciplinary discourses. In the role of language teacher educator, I am responsible for supporting teachers by means of workshops, consultancy and resources. One resource offered to teachers is a language needs analysis that asks students about their difficulties with ten language functions commonly required of them at university, e.g. following lectures. It aims to provide teachers with information about students' language backgrounds and their present language needs (see Appendix A).

In the next section, I outline the context in which this needs analysis was used and describe the opportunities it created for professional development for content teachers.

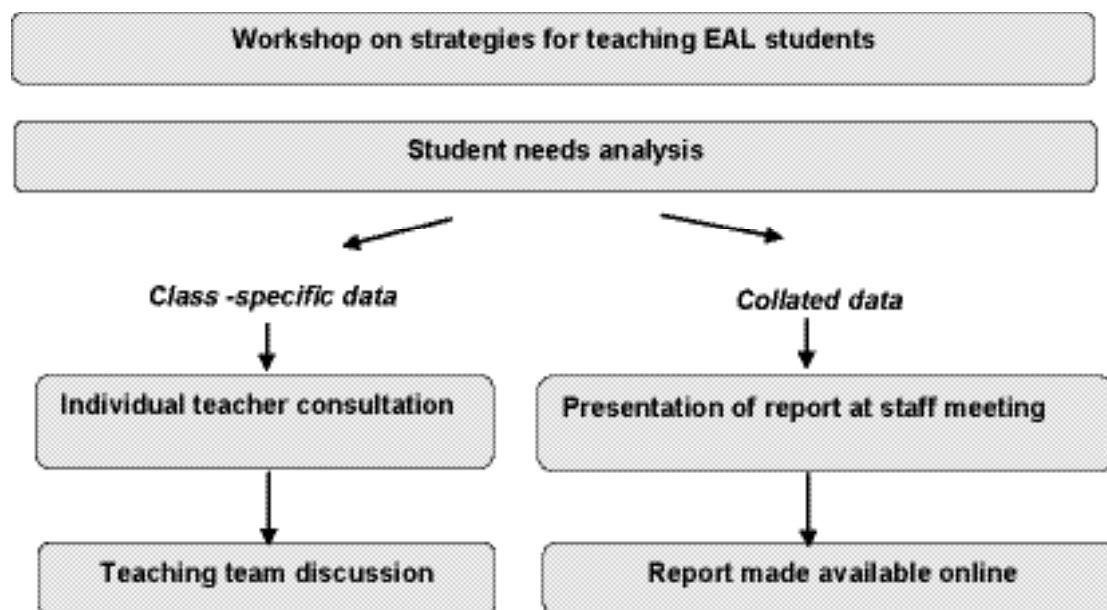
A Case Study

Picture the beginning of an academic year, with student numbers doubling in the business degree program because the international office has been inundated with applications. New teachers of business are hastily appointed and timetables reorganized. A suggestion is made that all teachers of first year students on the business degree need to learn about strategies for teaching international students, and a workshop with me is hurriedly arranged.

Of the 40 teachers expected only 23 turned up, and they made it clear that time is at a premium, wanting "solutions" to the classroom "problem" and requesting that the workshop be limited to one hour, instead of the allocated two. In the course of the workshop, I emphasized that data from the students about their language needs should underpin our discussions and offered to carry out a language needs analysis mid-semester of all first year undergraduate students in the business program. I collated and summarized the findings into a class profile of language needs for each of the 22 classes surveyed. The results were delivered to the program teachers so that they would be able to act on them immediately. Each class profile was based on the students' experiences of learning in the Faculty of Business in three separate papers. Each of these papers was taught by a different teacher so the students were reporting on their experiences of three different teachers but were not asked to specify which of the three teachers their comments refer to.

The classes were not organized according to language ability, although by chance some consisted of students who were all EAL (English as an additional language) users and some consisted of students who were all English first language users. The majority, however, were very heterogeneous. Irrespective of the linguistic diversity of the students, some class profiles indicated that the class had no difficulties at all, while others detailed specific problems. As a result, the profile of the whole cohort was likely to camouflage the individual needs of particular groups. In view of this, I made a decision to return each class profile individually to the class teacher who had organized the distribution of the questionnaire to the class. At the end of our one-on-one meeting I asked the teacher to share the findings in the class language profile and the outcomes of our discussion with the other two teachers who taught business papers to the same class. Meanwhile, the results for the complete cohort were presented in a full report to all teachers on the program (see Figure 1) and made available online. I will not elaborate further on the results of the report (Kirkness, 2004), but focus here on the interactions between the language teacher educator and the content teachers.

Figure 1. A Two-fold Approach to Engaging with Content Teachers



During the individual teacher consultations I shared teaching experiences, provided resources, and recommended websites and journal articles. The two most common requests were for resources on how to establish an inclusive climate and on preparing reading guidelines to engage students with written text. Other resources requested ranged from lists of basic teaching strategies to academic articles about professional development. During these discussions I developed an understanding of how content teachers induct students into the discourse of

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business. The conversations that took place were learning conversations at the heart of the language/content nexus, but adapted to the level of experience of each individual teacher. My reflections on the teachers' learning prompted me to ask them about their expectations of a language / discipline collaboration. This enquiry is the focus of the next section of the paper where I outline an action research study on the preferences of content teachers for engaging with professional development.

Method

An action research study lends itself to the collaborative nature of the discussions (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1989) and is an appropriate process for working with peers in a professional development context. It also supports the open and honest communication that took place. A questionnaire (see Appendix B) was distributed to all 16 teachers who had met with me to discuss the results of the needs analysis. These teachers were then invited to volunteer to be interviewed in follow-up sessions.

The data presented here result from the teachers' self-reports as provided in individual interviews with me in the role of language teacher educator. They offer a snapshot of a range of approaches and teacher understandings in one particular cohort. But the data reflect the concerns of those teachers with the most interest in developing students' language abilities, as they were very likely to be the ones who volunteered to reflect on the staff development process. While they may be the teachers most well-disposed towards the process, it must be remembered that they may not be representative of their colleagues. So although these data reveal the thoughts, feelings and concerns of these particular content teachers, they cannot be generalized.

Participants

Seven of the 16 teachers answered the questionnaire. Although this represents a response rate of 43%, care must be exercised when generalising from such a small number of informants. All seven teachers who answered the questionnaire had both disciplinary and teaching qualifications. Many had previous experience in secondary or primary teaching. Those who had intercultural experience as international teachers (i.e. their first language was not English), either in New Zealand or in non-English speaking cultures, reported that they could identify with the difficulties of international students from their own language learning experiences. For example, one international teacher said that knowing that abstract concepts do not always have a one-to-one translation helped her teaching. Many drew on previous roles (as a sign language expert, a teacher of the mentally handicapped, or an expert with dyslexic children) to account for their understanding of the needs of students studying in a medium that is not their first language. One teacher felt her secondary school training and subsequent professional development in a government-funded project entitled Language Through Learning gave her the ideal foundation to teach a multicultural class at the tertiary level.

Findings

What mode of professional development do content teachers prefer?

Respondents were asked to identify which of the three staff development events (workshop, consultation, and report) they had taken part in, and to comment on the effectiveness of the event.

Workshop

Only three of the seven respondents had attended the workshop but all three were very positive about its effectiveness. They said that the workshop confirmed their existing ideas and gave them confidence that they were “on the right track.” It appeared to bring “ideas to the forefront” and raise awareness. For one teacher, the workshop was “more than a source of new ideas,” as it apparently helped elucidate some complex learning issues. Two teachers suggested that, in a workshop, checklists were exactly what teachers wanted as they were unlikely to read a journal article. Another said that she could hear the advice at the workshop still ringing in her ears. Yet another said that she now checked before teaching to see that she had visual backup for oral language. One said that she had no context to relate the discussion to and suggested that workshops would be more useful two weeks into the semester.

Consultation

The teachers said the data from individual consultations gave them cause to reflect on their teaching style and “how it might be viewed by students.” The majority rated the consultation with a language teacher educator as 6 or 7, with one rating it at 5 on a seven point scale of usefulness (1 = not useful and 7 = very useful). Even before the needs analysis was distributed, some teachers had already found out about the language and educational background of their students by using the electronic database or making notes about the students when they introduced themselves in the first class.

One teacher said that the discussion with the language teacher educator “articulated a process that is often only an intuitive response to problems.” Another stated that the results of the needs analysis revealed “some surprises” and led to a new understanding that would enhance her practice. Teachers felt that the needs analysis provided feedback which they often found difficult to elicit from EAL students. All were encouraged by the detail of the student feedback and many expressed their intention to adapt their practice to meet the students’ language needs.

As indicated above, the teachers I interviewed were asked to pass on the class profile to the other two teachers who taught business papers to the same class. One teacher forwarded the data and the resources provided during the consultation, another engaged in discussion with the other two teachers about the student comments in her class profile. The majority, however, cited time as a reason for not discussing the outcomes with the two others that the comments in the class profile referred to. For one teacher, the fact that her class profile contained some negative comments kept her from sharing the data with her colleagues. She was concerned that the profile could be seen as her implied criticism of them.

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Report

While one teacher commented that everyone is too tired to take in a report of a full scale study of students' language needs at the end of the semester, several said that the report gave them an idea of the big picture across the whole team, helping them see their own class in context.

Teacher Concerns

Several teachers commented that they did not understand the enrolment procedures that allowed students into a university degree program with low English skills. Some teachers believed that part of the problem of language proficiency lay in the random composition of classes. Teachers said they could cope with differing abilities if the classes were homogeneous (either all EAL or all English L1) but the combination of different language learning needs was problematic. One non-native English speaking teacher sought reassurance about her marked foreign accent, saying she found local students intolerant of foreign accents. She also wondered whether she could be understood by EAL students.

Teachers said that the need to slow down their delivery and simplify content competed with curriculum coverage. They felt they were struggling for survival and not teaching the way they wanted to. One teacher sought advice about how to motivate the English L1 speakers when 98% of the class required slow speech and regular explanations of simple terms. Another sent me samples of her students' work to make a point about standards of writing. Three out of the seven teachers expressed their concern about the small percentage of points allocated for language in assessments. Directives to overlook language errors and mark for content only were at variance with their approach to student learning. They felt that marking for content only was lowering standards and that as employers they would question an institution that awarded qualifications to students who could not communicate effectively. All the teachers who discussed language issues indicated that the imperative to cover the curriculum conflicted with the support of language development.

Role of the Language Teacher Educator

The next section of the questionnaire asked teachers to select any other forms of professional development that might be helpful to them in their linguistically mixed classes. All unanimously voted for a checklist of strategies to remind them of what they could include in their practice. All but one wanted a needs analysis to elicit data about the students' language needs, as well as articles on how to promote student language development in content subjects. Three teachers wanted a workshop where they could discuss their specific concerns, and three also wanted a language teacher educator to observe a class they taught and then discuss the issues. One person wanted this discussion online. All respondents said they considered it their responsibility to help develop students' language skills.

The teachers interviewed had clear ideas about how a language teacher educator could be most useful. One teacher suggested that language expertise would best be used on a weekly drop-in basis so that the students could clarify language issues with an expert. A non-native English speaking teacher said she would welcome a video in which she could observe distinguished teachers and model her own teaching accordingly.

Discussion

In a discussion of models of content-based instruction, Crandall and Kaufmann (2002) present five challenges for language educators to consider. I use these five challenges here as a framework for exploring the particular outcomes of this initiative.

1. Convincing content faculty to participate.
2. Developing and maintaining collaboration and communication.
3. Identifying and developing appropriate content.
4. Professional development.
5. Institutionalising the effort.

1. Convincing Content Faculty to Participate

The class profiles of the teachers interviewed were not the profiles that displayed major problems. The seven teachers who offered themselves for interview were those who appeared to have engaged with the issues and to have developed an understanding of the language needs of their students. They all displayed a positive attitude towards their students and a willingness to explore new teaching approaches. This confirms other findings that qualified teachers appear to be more open to investigating alternative approaches (Lueddeke, 2003; Nixon, Beattie, Challis, & Walker, 1998).

The teachers who volunteered to be interviewed were committed to their own professional development, while the teachers whose class profiles indicated that their students needed further language support did not volunteer to take part in the written questionnaire or interview process. The issue of how to convince faculty to participate willingly in a professional development initiative of this kind remains unresolved.

2. Developing and Maintaining Collaboration and Communication

Getting to know the teachers with their rich and diverse backgrounds helped me identify expertise in the team. One teacher, who had completed a pre-service language teacher training course, shared a similar vision to me and was very committed to the initiative. Liaising with teachers across the faculty, she organized the administration of the questionnaire. Another teacher, who had experienced a Learning Through Language project in the secondary sector, had an excellent understanding of the issues involved in linguistically mixed classes. This teacher was aware that her pedagogical understanding was not of interest to the other two in her team, who were highly qualified discipline experts. My request to discuss the class profile with these same colleagues created an invidious situation for her, as a newcomer to the tertiary sector. This could have been remedied if there had been a formal structure, supported at all levels, for each team of three to talk about the class profile with colleagues. Such a process for handling the student feedback may have facilitated spreading the word (Nixon et al., 1998).

3. Identifying and Developing Appropriate Content

The model proposed here does not involve classroom teaching on the part of the language teacher educator and therefore obviates the need to choose appropriate teaching materials in an unfamiliar discipline.

4. Professional Development

Some of the teachers interviewed voiced anxiety about how to support a diverse student body. One teacher with a strong background in disability education admitted he had been afraid of teaching large numbers of EAL students. However, his first experience of an EAL class was positive, and he now requests a class with all EAL students. Another teacher commented on how difficult it was to elicit information from EAL students about their needs and wishes. Given that it took no more than 15 minutes to elicit written data from the whole class, the comment appears to refer to oral interaction with EAL students. This anxiety about not understanding a student's spoken language, and consequent feelings of inadequacy, should not be underestimated. If teachers can overcome their fears and engage their students with questions about their learning needs, they may start to see them as resources and the classroom as a source for solutions (Harshbarger, 1997). They may then value students' linguistic resources and adapt their teaching practices accordingly (Reid et al., 1998).

All the teachers interviewed talked about their students' learning needs rather than about the students as problems (Reid, 1996). The needs analysis offered insight into students' views of their language needs, both for the classroom teacher and for the language teacher educator. One teacher said the student data acted as an eye-opener for her, enabling her to see the learning world that the students were experiencing in her classroom. Such perspectives are a salutary reminder that what we, as teachers, intend to deliver may be interpreted very differently by our students (Trigwell & Prosser, 1997).

This case study presents one model to promote a central role for language in tertiary content teaching. The structures required to move from an individual example of good practice to a systemic model (i.e. challenge 5 - institutionalising the effort) is beyond the scope of this paper.

Critical Reflection

Ur (1996) considers the use of critical discussion and reflection as a means of assisting teachers in integrating theory and practice to be the most worthwhile contribution to training teachers. Critical reflection is at the core of the scholarship of teaching (Brew, 2003) and is central to development as a teacher. The teachers in this study who engaged in the process of critical reflection about their role as teachers of discipline discourse demonstrated a scholarly commitment to their teaching. The interactive and reflective nature of the discussions exemplified elements of scholarly teaching: engaging with colleagues' contributions to teaching and learning, as well as critical reflection on one's own practice (Brew, 2003; Healey, 2000). The teachers demonstrated a commitment to and an understanding of the learning process. Their reflections reminded them of maxims that, they said, still resonated from the workshop and influenced their present practice.

All were experienced teachers able to work with the data on their students' language needs and analyze whether these needs could be met by the teachers, the curriculum, or catered for on other programs. They evaluated the informal assessments of their students' needs in the light of the data presented. Reflections were often shared with the language teacher educator in a mutual attempt to arrive at a solution. One teacher admitted to some surprises about her class language profile, discussed the issues in our consultation, and proceeded to make changes as a result.

The process outlined above is an example of collaborative professional development which enables interactions between different disciplines (King, 2004). The student data provided a catalyst for ongoing discussions between discipline expert and language teacher educator, which fostered critical reflective practice. The content teachers initiated and organized the first steps in this process, thereby demonstrating a willingness to engage with the issues (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999; Wisdom, 1995). They wanted to find out how students on the program experienced language; the process supports a growing preference for academic development at department or faculty level (Nixon et al., 1998).

Good academic development encourages university teachers to consider the student perspective (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999). This underscores the way academic development can lead toward self-empowerment (Crosling & Webb, 2002).

The teachers shared with me their experiences with the class, the strategies that worked and those that did not, the highlights as well as some of the difficulties.

The range of the teachers' perspectives on learning gave me a deeper understanding of their content teaching and curriculum constraints. Nixon reflects on a similar collaboration: "We learned individually and collectively that the development of teaching is a personal and complex issue and that the methods used by teachers to enrich and grow professionally can be as diverse as the people who develop them" (Nixon et al., 1998, p. 287). Our collaborative, exploratory discussions developed into learning conversations about the complex nature of language and content teaching. The interactions that took place extended beyond sharing interdisciplinary knowledge, to offer new insights and help reinforce our common interest in enhancing student learning.

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Appendix A

Language Needs Analysis

Questionnaire for Students About Language Skills

What do you find most difficult?

A.

Class _____

First language _____

Time spent in English-speaking country _____ (if applicable)

B. Please answer this questionnaire to help us adapt our teaching to your learning needs.

Please tick any areas that you find difficult in the second column and then briefly explain why those areas are difficult for you in the third column.

1. Language function	2. Tick here if you find this difficult:	3. Give reasons or examples
Following lectures, instructions		
Note-taking		
Writing correct English		
Arguing different points of view in writing / speaking		
Using formal or informal language when appropriate		
Asking and answering classroom questions		
Giving oral presentations		
Contributing to group work		
Completing background reading		
Discussing your work one to one with a tutor		

Appendix B

Questionnaire to Teachers in Business on Preferred Modes of Staff Development Questionnaire

This research is part of my ongoing work in staff development to promote academic literacy skills. Please answer the questions below with reference to my work with you in 2004:

1. Which of my staff development session(s) on the language needs of IBS students did you attend in 2004?
 - a. workshop on strategies for teaching EAL students
 - b. one to one discussion of the language needs of your class
 - c. presentation of research on students' language needs at the IBS program review meeting

2. Give details of how any of the above sessions you attended may have influenced your practice
 - a. workshop on strategies for teaching EAL students

 - b. one to one discussion of the language needs of your class

 - c. presentation of research on students' language needs at the IBS program review meeting

3. Data was collected and collated about student perceptions of their language needs. This was reported to you individually. How useful was this data for your teaching?
Put a tick by the number (1 =not useful at all to 7 =very useful)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. Please explain in your own words why the data was useful for you.

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5. Tick any of the following which you would find useful for your teaching in linguistically mixed classes?
- a. observation of a class you teach by a language advisor followed by discussion with you
 - b. data about students' language needs
 - c. articles on how to promote language development in content subjects
 - d. checklist of strategies as a reminder of what you could be including in your practice
 - e. workshop where you could discuss your specific concerns
 - f. a teaching video to demonstrate good practice
 - g. on-line discussion with language advisor

If you are happy to be interviewed, please indicate this by signing your name below. The interview would be about support for teaching students in a linguistically mixed class and would last from 20 to 40 minutes. .

Thank you for answering this questionnaire.

Please return your answers to me electronically or through the internal mail to Alison Kirkness, LE.

Internationalization Begins at Home: Domestic Collaboration for International Second Language Teacher Education

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Introduction

In this report I describe an initiative to develop international exchanges between the Canadian province of Alberta and the Mexican state of Jalisco for second language (SL) teacher education. The initiative took place in the academic year of 2003-2004 and brought together various educators and administrators in SL and SL teacher education from Alberta and Jalisco. It resulted in the formulation of five international exchange projects designed to immerse SL teachers and student teachers in pedagogical settings in the culture of their target language. However, this report does not focus on the exchange projects resulting from the initiative. Rather, it discusses further knowledge outcomes related to planning international SL teacher education, namely the kinds of people involved in such planning, the procedures they followed, the range of considerations, concepts, and preferences for final project design, and the measures of success that guided participants' evaluation of organizational performance. In particular I trace how domestic collaboration in Alberta emerged as an important factor in informing and obtaining pedagogically meaningful international programming.

Research literature on developing international programming pays scant attention to the kinds of professionals and institutions involved and the processes they follow. Research focusing on international SL exchange has primarily considered linguistic gains (Brecht, Davidson, & Ginsberg, 1993; Brecht & Robinson, 1995; DeKeyser, 1991; Freed 1991; Lapkin, Hart, & Swain, 1995; Miller & Ginsberg, 1995; Polanyi, 1995), though some concerns curricular design and pedagogical issues (Bertocchini & Costanzo, 1996; Brierley & Coleman, 1997; Chieffo & Zipser, 2001; Gorka & Niesenbaum, 2001; Langston, 1990; Spaulding, Mauch, & Lin, 2001; Wilkinson, 2000, 2001). Research specifically addressing international teacher education programming (Barkhuizen & Feryok, 2006; Bennett, 1990; Bertocchini & Costanzo, 1996; Cushner & Mahon, 2002; Myers, 1997; Osnes-Taylor, 1994; Stachowski & Mahan, 1995) supports the view that immersing student teachers or practicing teachers in foreign language environments is effective for improving cross-cultural competence and attaining greater awareness of cultural difference. However, such research rarely elaborates on who develops international education programming or how they come to conceptualize it or set it up. The initiative between Alberta and Jalisco to devise effective international SL teacher education experiences for the development of their SL teachers' and student teachers' linguistic and intercultural competences was at once an opportunity to study the involvement of particular players and the procedures they followed to move toward their goals.

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As project coordinator of the initiative, it was my responsibility to consult with the SL and international education professionals of various institutions in Alberta and encourage them to think and plan together. This dual research and facilitating role afforded me a unique vantage point from which to document how the collaborative process developed and to observe how collaboration — rather than competition — between institutions led to the kinds of multifaceted programming that institutions working in isolation are less likely to achieve. While developed in Alberta with Alberta players, the domestic collaborative process for the internationalization of SL teacher education described in this report can serve as a guide that SL planners and policy makers elsewhere may use or adapt to suit their own administrative circumstances when developing international teacher education programs with their own international partners.

The situation regarding international exchanges for SL education in Alberta preceding the initiative will likely resonate with education professionals in other jurisdictions in Canada, other English-speaking countries, and elsewhere. For example, referring to American teachers and student teachers, Cushner and Mahon (2002) point out that while teachers in today's globalized world require international experience, schools of education rarely provide them with such opportunities. They also indicate that even when the opportunity is available, due to curriculum constraints, few student teachers pursue student teaching abroad. While Alberta education institutions offer foreign partners a number of professional services in the areas of English as a second language (ESL) learning and teaching and SL teaching, and while institutions may benefit financially from international student fees, international linguistic, cultural, and professional development opportunities for Alberta teachers remain limited and qualified. This is especially the case for international professional development in places where English is not the language of the host community abroad. In the recent past institutional players have operated in isolation or even in competition with each other as they have marketed Alberta internationally for the purpose of student recruitment and the sale of educational programming. Most of the programming offered is designed specifically as one-way, primarily (if not exclusively) for the linguistic, cultural, and professional benefit of a paying foreign partner, and rarely builds reciprocity into the program design (Plews, 2004). Most current programming is not integrated into substantial professional development services for the Alberta teacher.

Furthermore, there is little in the way of international programming designed specifically for the professional development of Alberta practicing SL teachers and none specifically for SL student teachers. Teacher exchanges need not necessarily be for SL teachers and indeed most exchanges are with other English-speaking countries or provinces. Student teachers may take part in summer language programs abroad at any stage in their bachelor of education degree, but these programs are not designed explicitly with future SL teachers in mind. They are designed for the “language learner” and even then, since the foreign partners usually offer general language and culture courses to all comers, they serve to replace classes at Alberta universities. The programs are almost never articulated with the domestic degree program in education. Spaulding, Mauch, and Lin (2001) query offering international students — and so, by extension, international student teachers and practicing teachers — preexisting programming that does not integrate their interests. Thus in this paper I explore the following question: Which people and what considerations are necessary for establishing mutually beneficial international educational programs?

The first part of the paper outlines the context of the initiative. The second part focuses on the collaborative process of investigation and planning. A series of meetings and interviews identified stakeholders and local knowledge of the conditions necessary for successful international programming in terms of program needs and of building cross-institutional and intercultural alliances. These stakeholders represented various educational institutions or constituencies, but they had rarely, if ever, cooperated on international projects. In the investigation and planning process, participants found that the unique collaboration of domestic institutions contributed significantly to their ability to conceive and create mutually beneficial programming with an international partner.

The information contained in this paper is based on participant observation and written notes taken during stakeholder interviews and meetings, correspondence with stakeholders, documentation of planning and events, and a review of research literature. In particular I report on a succession of meetings and discussions which took place mostly in Edmonton, Alberta. These meetings helped to identify the immediate Alberta stakeholders, established their interests, needs, and concerns, and collected their relevant experiences and ideas.

The Context of the Initiative for the Internationalization of SL Teacher Education in Alberta

In the fall of 2000, the Passport to the Millennium conference in Edmonton, Alberta, brought together a number of people from the Alberta government, universities, school boards, business, and community organizations to discuss languages and Alberta's relation to the rest of the world. This conference resulted in the shared understanding among participants that Alberta should improve upon its ability to conduct its affairs internationally, that it should know how its international partners think and work, and that it needs to improve linguistic and cross-cultural competence in the province. After the conference, Alberta's ministry for education further pursued the possibility of introducing a new policy in SL education (see Alberta Learning, 2003). These efforts culminated on April 22, 2004, when Alberta Learning (now reorganized as the Ministries of Education and Advanced Education) announced a new policy to enhance SL learning in the province.

This new policy makes the learning of a language other than English (LOTE) a compulsory component of the curriculum in Alberta in Grades 4 through 9. Implementation of the new policy was scheduled for the 2006-2007 school year, beginning with Grade 4. Further grade levels will be added one at a time in sequence each year until 2011-2012. Students will continue to have the option of studying their chosen LOTE or beginning another in Grades 10 through 12. (An SL will not be required for high school graduation.) The vision of Alberta Learning is for Alberta students to be able to "communicate and interact in two or more languages" (Bexte & Sokolowski, 2003/2004, p. 2).

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Given the new policy, there is significant pressure on the existing education system, and especially on those institutions that offer teacher education and professional development for teachers, to provide increased opportunities to help current teachers and to encourage future teachers to acquire or improve linguistic abilities in a LOTE, cross-cultural literacy, and pedagogical expertise in teaching an SL and its culture. One pertinent way to address such professional needs is international cooperation and exchange.

While exploring the resources and readiness of the province's educational institutions for facilitating the new policy, Alberta Learning approached the University of Alberta International (UAI) office and its Education Abroad Programs division to discuss the international courses in SL and foreign cultures offered to university students. Alberta Learning was interested in finding out whether existing international SL courses could be integrated into professional development opportunities for teachers in the school system. In response, the UAI wondered whether its broader expertise in public-to-public and public-to-private international partnership building could be applied so as to bring together the different institutions involved in the education system in Alberta with international partners from around the world. The intention of such connections would be to establish sustainable core international components specifically for the professional development of practicing SL teachers and within SL student teacher education.

In particular, the UAI thought of expanding ties with Alberta's sister state of Jalisco in Mexico for the benefit of educators and students in both regions. The need for SL teachers, especially of Spanish, in Alberta's public schools and the concern for the improvement of the quality of Spanish teaching and the proficiency of Spanish spoken by Alberta teachers was matched by a similar need and concern for competent teaching and learning of English in Jalisco.

Thus, the UAI undertook an initiative that researched the opportunities to expand Alberta's relationship with Jalisco for the purposes of supporting the joint need for better and greater SL, as well as intercultural teacher education and in-service professional development for the K-12 system (International Relations, 2003). This initiative took place over the period of September 2003 through April 2004. Its specific objectives were:

1. To identify and involve the stakeholders within the government and educational institutions in Alberta;
2. To assess existing opportunities for and challenges to international programs;
3. To identify programs that would be attractive to international SL student teachers and practicing K-12 teachers;
4. To develop a model for an international experience component in SL teacher education for Alberta student teachers and for professional development for Alberta practicing SL teachers that would encourage greater linguistic proficiency and cultural literacy; and
5. To identify places of cross-institutional and intercultural cooperation to enhance international education and SL teaching capacity.

The activities planned for the initiative included coordination and research in Alberta, research in Jalisco, and the compilation and reporting of results. These activities initially brought together a number of representatives from several government departments and educational institutions in Alberta, then subsequently made it possible for those Alberta representatives to meet with their counterparts from various governmental and educational institutions in the state of Jalisco, Mexico.

The Collaborative Process of Investigation and Planning

To begin the effort, a coordinator was hired from the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. This coordinator reported on a monthly basis to a university committee that oversaw planning. The committee consisted of the Director of International Relations, the Director of Education Abroad Programs, and an International Relations Officer (all three from the UAI), the Associate Dean for Teacher Education from Undergraduate Student Services in the Faculty of Education, and the Chair of the Department of Modern Languages in the Faculty of Arts. This committee met eight times over the eight months of the initiative.

Within the first month of the project, the UAI also arranged a roundtable meeting with potential Alberta stakeholders. The purpose of this meeting was:

1. To introduce and discuss the background and scope of the initiative;
2. To speculate on possible outcomes;
3. To begin to identify a core group of stakeholders; and
4. To give attendees the opportunity to meet and become better acquainted.

The attendees at the informal meeting were suggested by the UAI and the Faculty of Education and came from University of Alberta departments and centers involved in SL teacher education, SL teaching, ESL, and international programs, from various divisions within Alberta Learning, and from the two local public school boards, Edmonton Public Schools and Edmonton Catholic Schools District.

This meeting gave the project coordinator the opportunity to arrange individual interviews with those attendees who considered themselves definite stakeholders or who could provide valuable information or experience in regard to the objectives of the initiative. The coordinator then conducted open-ended interviews in order to learn about the experiences, needs, interests, concerns, and challenges of the stakeholders' respective educational constituencies in regard to existing and future programs. Further individuals were contacted upon recommendation by one of the initial interviewees. The interviews occurred over a period of four months and totalled 38 in number. The stakeholders interviewed thus represented various units within the provincial government, universities, and school boards.

Since one of the aims of this report is to identify the kinds and range of education professionals who might inform or be involved in planning international SL teacher education programming, I will list the stakeholders by their professional capacity. SL planners and policy makers outside Alberta can likely find equivalences in their own political and educational institutions.

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The provincial government was represented by members of:

- Basic Learning Division, Alberta Learning, Government of Alberta (including the School Improvement Branch of Field Services and the Curriculum Branch of Provincial Standards and Processes);
- International Policy, Alberta Learning, Government of Alberta; and the Learning Network (an outsourced public-private teacher exchange service).

The representatives of higher education institutions came from:

- International Relations and the Education Abroad Programs, University of Alberta International (an administrative office with Faculty status at the province's largest public university);
- Undergraduate Student Services, Faculty of Education, the University of Alberta;
- Department of Secondary Education, Faculty of Education, the University of Alberta;
- Department of Elementary Education, Faculty of Education, the University of Alberta;
- Department of Education Policy Studies, Faculty of Education, the University of Alberta;
- Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Alberta;
- Faculté St. Jean, University of Alberta (a French-language faculty that offers teacher education in French);
- International Education, Mount Royal College, Calgary (an administrative office with Faculty status at the province's second-largest community college); and
- Department of French, Italian, and Spanish, Faculty of Humanities, University of Calgary (the province's second-largest university).

The representatives of basic education institutions came from:

- Edmonton Public Schools (a publicly funded school board in the province's capital city);
- Edmonton Catholic Schools District (a publicly funded, faith-based school board in the province's capital city);
- Elk Island Public Schools (a publicly funded, suburban-rural school board bordering the capital city);
- Calgary Public Schools (a publicly funded school board in the province's largest city); and
- the Alberta Spanish Language Consortium (a province-wide free association of school, university, and government departments that teach or promote the teaching of Spanish).

The stakeholders interviewed were pleased and excited to take part in this initiative by relating their interests and experiences regarding the development and implementation of cross-cultural education programming for SL teacher education and professional development. Clear information soon emerged from the combined wealth of knowledge of the stakeholders involved. A saturation of ideas occurred after only a handful of interviews, but it was deemed important to consult a variety of people across institutions in order to guarantee an understanding of the topic that reflected the range of potential players in Alberta. The information that emerged during the preliminary interviews and meetings in Alberta falls into nine categories:

1. Existing international programs in Alberta;
2. Educational services Alberta can offer;
3. Alberta needs;
4. Programs of interest to Albertans (ideas for models to develop and pursue)
5. Issues in Alberta;
6. Factors to consider when designing programs;
7. Factors to consider when designing programs in partnership specifically with Mexico;
8. Steps involved in the process of international educational programming;
9. Conditions for successful international educational programming.

The information gathered and arranged according to the above nine categories (for full details, see Plews, 2004) guided the continued collaborative process. The stakeholders interviewed considered the opportunities afforded by the internationalization of SL teacher education to be useful in serving the four basic Alberta needs of:

1. SL capacity building;
2. Language proficiency and fluency (in Spanish);
3. Cultural knowledge and competence; and
4. Cultural immersion experience (e.g., mobility to work and study in a Spanish immersion context).

Ideally, short- and long-term international components could be introduced into SL delivery in schools, the undergraduate modern languages and SL teacher education programs, the graduate diploma program in SL teacher education, or into professional development for teachers. The stakeholders considered each of these needs as being equally important, as well as strategically related. Many stakeholders were surprised to find that they were working for the same professional ends and had common interests. Namely, if improvement in proficiency and competence could be encouraged and addressed through international cultural experience, the resulting increased confidence and skill would likely have a positive affect on capacity building and retention.

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The stakeholder meetings were useful for all involved since few were acquainted due to the largely decentralized education system in Alberta, typical of North America. Internal collaboration between departments within an institution or between different institutions within a region is a necessary condition for the process of establishing programs which include external collaboration with international partners (Godbey & Turlington, 2002). In the Alberta case, such collaboration particularly enabled the following: a sharing of experiences, needs, and ideas; an increase in the number of professional environments across the system that any one institution could offer a foreign partner; broader integration of research and language teacher pedagogy in language planning; and the envisioning of a more holistic plan. The university internationalization initiative committee was also useful for monitoring the steps in the process. However, as the core stakeholders were identified and the initiative progressed, it was realized that the committee and initiative appeared too university-centered. Certainly collaboration with school board representatives was essential for the identification and discussion of preferred and feasible models and projects.

Existing opportunities for international programming in Alberta are plenty and diverse. This diversity reflects a range of academic needs, professional intentions, and linguistic proficiencies. Various Alberta institutions have much to offer an international partner, including SL teacher education, ESL, work-study monitorships (in an English-speaking environment), professional culture (e.g., job shadowing), and educational development and leadership programming. Bertocchini and Costanzo (1996) point out that while teacher visits to other countries provide language practice and raise awareness of common problems and cultural differences, without structured and obligatory seminars and assignments, they will amount to educational tourism. Visit-style programming may be limiting for the foreign partner and the domestic host alike. One-way, incoming visiting international teacher programs do provide Alberta teachers with significant learning in regard to professional intercultural awareness, but for the Alberta teachers this learning takes place in English and in a passive manner within the home culture.

The stakeholders generally considered an integrated, reciprocal model to be the most advantageous for international programming. That is, the preferred model is not just a one-way educational training product that is bought or sold, but rather a program that sees Alberta students or teachers go to Jalisco schools and universities and Jaliscans come in return to Alberta institutions or at a minimum have significant professional contact with Albertans while they visit Jalisco. Stakeholders believed Alberta teachers could provide ESL and teacher education while receiving Spanish language and culture training. This programming could be considered a compulsory component of each system's respective SL teaching degrees or professional development diplomas. Similarly, visiting international teacher programs could be expanded to become two-way, consecutive exchanges specifically for SL teachers so that language and culture learning opportunities and professional connections could be provided for foreign and Alberta SL teachers in their respective target SL.

An image of ideal integrated international programming emerged from the interviews and meetings. This would comprise:

- A number of projects:
 1. Offered in a variety of lengths of stay (two weeks, one month, three months, or a whole academic year);
 2. Created with a clear and advertised pedagogical mission (see also Barkhuizen & Feryok, 2006; see Brierley & Coleman, 1997, for an example of general pedagogical goals);
 3. Organized by a permanent administrative and academic staff;
 4. Taught by quality teachers.
- Pre-exchange preparation:
 1. International awareness and pre-departure language and culture training (see also Barkhuizen & Feryok, 2006; Brierley & Coleman, 1997; Chieffo & Zipser, 2001; Freed, 1995; Gorka & Niesenbaum, 2001; Jackson, 2004; Langston, 1990; Wilkinson, 2001).
- Graduated ESL (for the partner) or SL (for the Alberta participant).
- Cultural or educational content courses in the target language (see also Barkhuizen & Feryok, 2006; Jackson, 2004):
 1. Workshops or seminars, with visits to cultural sites (see also Chieffo & Zipser, 2001; Jackson, 2004; Langston, 1990; Myers, 1996);
 2. Credited toward and articulated with an overall degree (see also Barkhuizen & Feryok, 2006; Chieffo & Zipser, 2001) or diploma program or career advancement schedule.
- Teacher-mentoring (see also Barkhuizen & Feryok, 2006), job shadowing, or work placements.
- Home stay opportunities (see Jackson, 2004; c.f. Wilkinson, 2000, 2001).
- Linguistic, emotional (see also Wilkinson, 2000, 2001), and cultural (see Talburt & Stewart, 1999) support during programming.
- Post-exchange component:
 1. Debriefing;
 2. Reports;
 3. Presentations;
 4. Follow-up course (see also Barkhuizen & Feryok, 2006; Brierley & Coleman, 1997; Gorka & Niesenbaum, 2001; Jackson, 2004);
 5. Alumni promotion (see also Langston, 1990).
- Ongoing documentation and research, including post-program “tracer studies,” (Spaulding, Mauch, & Lin, 2001) to inform and improve the program

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Participant observation of the collaborative process in Alberta and findings from the research literature (see esp. Allen, Broome, Jones, Chen, & Collier, 2003) also brought to light a comprehensive series of measures of success. Measures of success are a set of guiding criteria comprising values-based and outcome-oriented behaviors, actions, and experiences, and are assembled so that group members can evaluate the organizational performance and identify the necessary steps for moving toward and obtaining goals. The delegates on the planned mission to Jalisco could refer to the measures of success in order to help them reflect on and assess their interactions with each other as well as their experiences.

Five general conditions of successful cross-institutional and intercultural cooperation were identified. The first was an increased understanding of each other's educational environment. This involved:

1. Providing descriptions of each other's environments and culture;
2. Stating, acknowledging, and accepting (structural, power, and cultural) differences (both intergroup and intragroup);
3. Exchanging and being familiar with each other's expectations (creating a "shared context" for the project);
4. Discussing the ways each group goes about discussing, so as to overcome misunderstandings in style; and
5. Freely offering information.

The second condition was making plans and specifying activities together. This involved sharing all potential project ideas and main areas of interest or focus with the intention of reducing this list down to one main joint starter project and three or four smaller joint projects that address the interests of both partners.

The third condition was mutual indications of reliability, feasibility, and continuity. This involved:

1. Recognizing or establishing proximity (i.e., through geography or communications technology, and travel);
2. Discussing the next steps in the administrative, institutional, or cultural processes;
3. Investigating and determining whether institutional support structures are in place or need to be put in place;
4. Identifying people at the local level and above to administer, facilitate, and participate in projects or programs;
5. Setting appropriate and generous time lines; and
6. Estimating and applying for necessary funds.

The fourth condition concerned building trust by:

1. Listening, and avoiding models and methods that are culturally inappropriate for the partner;
2. Striving for interpersonal connections that are characterized by professional authenticity, personal authenticity, “relational empathy” (Allen et al., 2003), and a willingness to adapt one’s own perspective to accommodate others and especially the partner;
3. Taking one’s time and committing to projects over time; and
4. Discussing intention to sign agreements.

Finally, the fifth condition for successful cooperation involved recognizing the existence of a cross-institutional and intercultural alliance by:

1. Perceiving a future that is different from the present;
2. Confirming an identifiable group of personally committed individuals and determining how to use them as a permanent delegation;
3. Reflecting on the inclusion of further players; and
4. Publicizing positive outcomes in the broader communities.

The Alberta stakeholder delegates prepared themselves for the mission to Jalisco with three meetings. First, there was a presentation by an Education professor on SL education and teacher education in Jalisco. Then, there was a follow-up meeting in which we aimed both to exchange ideas about interests, needs, possibilities, and challenges shared among the Alberta constituencies, and to discuss how they related to the interests and nature of the education system in Jalisco as presented. Finally, there was a predeparture meeting that helped the delegates to conceive, prepare, and coordinate their presentations on the Alberta education system for their partners in Jalisco.

The pre-departure preparation meetings proved essential for the Alberta stakeholder delegates for:

1. Clarifying the partner’s educational system (including teacher education);
2. Foregrounding the intercultural nature of the initiative;
3. Sharing ideas and constituent interests;
4. Becoming acquainted and comfortable with colleagues from other institutions; and
5. Beginning to formulate and coordinate the formal presentations to be made to the foreign hosts and partners.

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The UAI and the International Relations Office of the Ministry of Education in Jalisco then arranged for a one-week mission to Guadalajara and Tequila in Jalisco. There, the members of the Alberta delegation got to know their Jalisco counterparts over a series of presentations, visits to schools and postsecondary institutions, formal meetings, and more informal cultural and social events. On this mission, the Alberta stakeholders from various institutions realized that they could work together and that by working together they could work more meaningfully with their Jaliscoan hosts and partners.

Conclusion

With the initiative outlined above, the UAI successfully brought together university researchers, school board representatives, and government officials in Alberta for productive discussions and joint planning. The initiative aligned educators who normally pursue their institutions' international interests in isolation. The UAI then connected those stakeholders with their counterparts in Jalisco for further talks and planning. These actions established a defined group of players who worked together to create pedagogically sound and mutually beneficial SL programming that is specific to Alberta and Jalisco institutions' combined needs. The five project ideas that emerged were: short-term teacher exchanges involving various school boards; a language monitor program involving a university department and schools in Alberta and practicing teachers from various education institutions in Jalisco; a cross-cultural field experience program for SL student teachers serving as an alternative international practicum; an institute for learning and teaching second languages; and joint research by professors in the two regions. To date, the first two projects — the teacher exchanges and the language monitor program — have been successfully implemented.

The focus of this report has been not on the end products of the initiative in terms of programming but, rather, on the unique circumstance of a variety of educational professionals coming together, and the process and considerations they adopted to arrive at those end products. The Alberta institutions involved in this initiative were able to imagine and offer conceptually comprehensive, multifaceted, intercultural programming when meeting with their international partners because they had taken the time both to get to know each other as a collective of institutions and to adopt a collaborative, self-reflective process. Other SL planners and policy makers beyond Alberta may also benefit from adopting a similarly collaborative and considered approach to planning for international education.

Currently, in seeking contacts abroad, school boards tend to operate on their own or with administrative support exclusively from a ministry of education; likewise, single members of a university department, be it in education or in language acquisition, normally work solely with the university's international office in order to approach foreign partners. However, SL planners hoping to develop more meaningful international SL education could bring together these various players from different education institutions or units to think and plan together before approaching a single set of partners, as was the case in Alberta regarding the initiative with Jalisco. Approaching and involving colleagues in various local or regional educational institutions naturally increases the input and variety of expertise and experience available within a project and can lead to an expanded, more comprehensive vision in international programming.

By bringing the various players together at regular meetings, individuals representing different institutions and student constituencies will develop a better understanding of each other's interests and needs and will soon recognize points of commonality, gather new ideas, and see advantages in drawing on each other's strengths and capacities. The resulting expanded vision of the group's combined interests and shared goals takes shape as a co-occurring increased range of services, environments, and experiences to offer international partners. This in turn will lead to greater possibilities for intercultural contact for domestic teachers and student teachers, both at home and when taking part in expanded programming abroad. The more domestic institutions can share in accommodating the specific and varied needs of a respective partner, the more likely it is that their teachers and student teachers will be offered similarly wide-ranging opportunities through reciprocity by the partner. Certainly, structural and contextual meaning for program participants can be improved when a university placement is accompanied by visits to schools and school administration, or when a placement in a school is combined with access to university courses.

While it may sometimes be logistically difficult to bring a large group of stakeholders together, and while the scope of institutional planning can often be hampered by territorial thinking, this was not the case with this initiative. In this instance, domestic collaboration broadened the range of expertise and encouraged representative individuals to think beyond their usual institutional sphere, thus leading to new possibilities for internationalization in SL education that would not have been as likely if the institutional units had worked on their own.

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Learning to Listen, Listening to Learn: Collaborating to Develop a “Context-Sensitive” ESL Teacher Education Program

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In the climate fostered by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), teacher education programs in the United States are under increasing scrutiny from educational policymakers as mounting evidence reveals that students, particularly those who have English as their second language, are not achieving at required rates. This unprecedented federal legislation, which holds schools accountable for annual increases in standardized test scores, has “unintentionally placed pressure on schools with high numbers of LEP [Limited English Proficiency] students” (Abedi, 2004). Advocates of NCLB typically link inadequate student achievement to inadequate teacher preparation, arguing that such programs fail to provide quality training for the teaching contexts in which their graduates find themselves (Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002).

We believe the program we designed in response to this kind of criticism represents a move toward the future of teacher education, in part, because we shifted our focus away from the traditional model of offering education courses to pre-service teachers on university campuses. Instead, we designed courses to address the needs of currently-practicing teachers in two schools, and offered them in these schools. To design this “school-based” model, we selected two K-8 schools in an inner-city school district in Pennsylvania, and developed a curriculum tailored to target the particular challenges in-service teachers face as they teach English Language Learners (ELLs) in their mainstream classrooms.

The participating schools, Logan and Madison, are located in areas of the city where there are large populations of Latino, Arabic, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Cambodian families. Of the 769 students enrolled at Logan the year this program was implemented, 48% were Asian or Latino. Of the 906 students enrolled at Madison, 36.7% were Asian or Latino. Of these, only 177 received ESOL instruction at Logan and only 79 received ESOL instruction at Madison. The relatively low numbers of Asian and Latino students receiving ESOL instruction combined with numerous teacher reports of these students’ struggles in their mainstream classrooms strongly suggests that *all* teachers in these schools needed knowledge and skills for teaching them. Moreover, the ESOL programs at the schools typically provided ELLs with just one or two ESOL classes each day. Most of their school day was spent in mainstream classrooms.

Our school-based teacher education program consisted of four eight-week courses that were supplemented with in-class support. To provide the in-class support, we visited the teachers on a weekly basis to assist with the implementation of pedagogical strategies that were taught in the courses. The first course provided an overview of teaching methods used for ELLs. The main assignments guided teachers through the design and implementation of, and reflection upon, lessons employing a variety of methods. In the second course, teachers first read about and discussed second language acquisition principles and then conducted diagnostic analyses of their

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ELLs' language proficiency and development. In the third course, teachers were guided through processes of curriculum critique and worked to adapt portions of their mandated curriculum for their ELLs. The final course provided an overview of social, historical, legal, and cultural issues influencing students' language learning and use in school settings, and teachers conducted small-scale ethnographic studies of their classrooms. Upon successful completion of the program, the teachers were eligible for Pennsylvania's Program Specialist: ESL Certificate.

Although all of the courses were previously instructed on the university campus, we believed the on-site context would require a new approach in order to most effectively address the teachers' classroom needs. Thus, our collective goal was to design and implement a program devoted to training teachers to cope with their current contexts. Kumaravadivelu's (2001) post-method approach to teacher education served us with a useful frame. His three-dimensional system, characterized as parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility, encourages a focus on "context-sensitive" language teacher education, teacher theorizing, and teacher empowerment. This view was useful to us because it offered a framework for focusing on the teachers we sought to train instead of positioning ourselves as omnipotent, a criticism of some school-based teacher education programs (Sandoval, 2001). As a consequence of taking this approach, course syllabi and assignments are constantly restructured. This fluid structure, one would assume, creates space for students to exert power over their own learning. This framework foregrounds in-service teacher knowledge as a starting point or a resource for meaning. Thus, in our program-course activities were developed to incorporate the teachers' individual teaching contexts, who they are as individuals, and what this experience meant for them as students acquiring new knowledge of the TESOL field. This new knowledge was intended to allow them to draw upon the parameter of possibility, thus enabling them to transform information learned in the courses and to apply this information to their own teaching context.

Although Kumaravadivelu's framework has contributed significantly to theoretical discussions of teacher education, less attention has been paid to its application to particular teacher training initiatives. Moreover, the shift in emphasis within language teacher education from the content of language teaching to the processes of language teaching has sparked an interest in studying those processes through the perspectives of teachers and teacher educators (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). This article is a reflective account of lessons we learned as language teacher educators in this context. Our perspectives on these lessons emerged from our three distinct roles: 1) a program developer and coordinator; 2) an instructor who taught the certificate courses; 3) an instructor who provided support to the teachers in their classrooms. The following questions guided our reflection:

1. To what extent were we able to successfully design and implement a "context-sensitive" language teacher education program? What limitations were associated with this attempt?
2. In what ways did our approach seem to facilitate and/or impede participants' knowledge and skill development for teaching ELLs?

Although collaboration has traditionally served as the cornerstone of school-based teacher education models, such models often do not account for the complexities of developing truly collaborative relationships between teachers and their educators (Johnson, 2002; Peters, 2002; Sandoval, 2001). At the onset of this partnership, we realized that the program's curriculum would not be effective without integrating suggestions from the teachers. That is, it was essential for the teachers' localized expertise to be integrated into the curriculum. Kumaravadivelu (2001) asserts that teacher educators' understanding of "local linguistic, sociocultural, and political particularities" is essential for language educators to truly be context sensitive. Thus, we sought to obtain a critical understanding of the teachers' everyday lived experiences. However, upon reflection we discovered that throughout the program our frame of reference was grounded in (and limited by) our experience of courses on our university's main campus. Alternatively, the teachers' frame of reference was grounded in their everyday experiences, and was affected by the extent to which our courses addressed their everyday dilemmas in terms of content, workload, and assignments. Their dilemmas were typically connected to the mandated curriculum and emphasis on standardized testing in each of the schools. We are still uncertain of the extent to which we were (and are) able to view these experiences from the teachers' perspectives; however, our attempts to do so afforded opportunities for us to learn a great deal about programmatic adaptations and interpersonal interactions that are congruent with context-sensitive teacher education.

Participants

All of the 18 participating teachers applied to the program and were selected on the basis of written applications and consultations with the schools' principals. We considered the teachers to be veterans: they had taught for an average of 8 years at their current school and 11 years overall. All participants successfully completed the program. This meant that 17% of the teachers in Logan Elementary School and 20% of the teachers in Madison Elementary School earned the Program Specialist: ESL Certificate. Participants and grade levels are detailed in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Participants and Grade Levels

Grade/Subject Taught	# of Participants
Kindergarten	2
First Grade	1
Second Grade	1
Third Grade	2
Fourth Grade	1
Fifth Grade	4
Eighth Grade	2
ESOL	1
Library Sciences	1
Technology	2
Reading/Administration	1

Data Collection

The sources of data used for this investigation included transcripts of interviews with participating teachers, e-mail correspondence with teachers, field notes from classroom observations, teacher feedback on course evaluations, teachers' written assignments, course materials, our own journals, and school district documents. Each teacher was interviewed twice during the program. The first set of interviews was conducted in October and November, 2004. The second set was conducted in April and May, 2005. Interviews were semi-structured and were approximately 45 minutes in length. Classroom observation data were collected from approximately 80 classroom support visits. These observations were guided by a format recommended by the University of Washington Center for Instructional Development and Research (see Appendix A).

Results

The following discussion first examines evidence of how enrollment in the program shifted teachers' perceptions of the ELLs in their classrooms. We believe the teachers' initial, limited perceptions of their ELLs transformed into informed theories about who their ELLs are and how they learn English best. Secondly, this analysis explores how the university instructors forged relationships with teachers by helping them to make connections to course assignments within their own classroom contexts, thus facilitating their processes of theorizing what they practice and practicing what they theorize. We will further expand upon this notion by exploring how the university instructors restructured course curricula in an attempt to more effectively contextualize the teachers' emerging theories. Finally, we will address implications of the teachers' resistance to aspects of our curriculum and our own resistance to adapting aspects of our curriculum.

Teacher Theorizing and Making Invisible Students Visible

Analysis of interview transcripts revealed that after two months in the program the teachers perceived themselves to be more informed about the ELLs in their classrooms. For example one teacher stated, "Through this [first] course I have learned that when teaching ELLs, I have to provide alternative ways of instructing them, slow down on instruction, state the objectives of the class in the beginning, use more examples when explaining something, and engage ESOL students in classroom activities as much as possible" (Interview, 11/15/04). Another teacher demonstrated attempts to empathize with her ELLs: "I now have a unique perspective into what their school day is like" (Interview, 2/11/05). Another commented on a noteworthy change: "This is the first year I took note of who is an ESOL student. In the past, everybody is just everybody" (Interview, 6/13/05). These comments suggest the teachers were developing a reflective capacity that allowed them to develop, interpret, and reevaluate their own theories of everyday classroom events. We feel as though such changes could be attributed, in large part, to their participation in the program. Their development reflects Kumaravadivelu's (2001) parameter of practicality: By becoming aware of the presence of these students and learning specific ways to adapt instruction for them, the teachers were beginning to develop pedagogies that addressed the "lived experiences" of their ELLs.

In addition to gaining an increased awareness of their ELLs' general instructional needs, we observed the teachers' increased skill in theorizing for the purpose of conducting individualized student assessments. For example, one teacher provided detailed assessments of her ELLs in response to the interview question "Who are the ELLs in your classroom?":

[Student A] is Cambodian. She has a very high understanding with listening skills, but she is basic in speaking. Her listening comprehension is good. She is still learning to read. She is much better phonetically, and she is trying to build reading comprehension. [Student B], who is technically ESOL, is advanced. I believe that he has reading problems, not language problems. There is the Indian girl. She is a beginner. She is very sweet and hardworking, but her comprehension skills, even verbally, are very limited. She can't apply. No one speaks her language, so we are trying to partner her. [Student C] has very little comprehension. He is a beginner, so I tried the audio-lingual method with him. (Interview, November 1, 2004)

This teacher's assessments were encouraging to us because they illustrate a pedagogy grounded in Kumaravadivelu's (2001) "cycle of observation, reflection, and action", which was central to our context-sensitive approach. With this, she combined linguistic and pedagogic content knowledge learned in the courses with observations and teaching strategies responsive to her students' needs.

Even though many of our results were encouraging, analysis of interview transcripts also revealed that the incongruent ideologies that drove each institution (i.e. the university and the school district) limited this collaboration. For example, the school district's mandated curriculum emphasized accountability and achieving adequate yearly progress. Accompanying these emphases was a significant amount of time spent on standardized testing. Because the first two weeks of April and of May were completely devoted to testing, classes were not held. On the other hand, our notion of our own role included a commitment to providing teachers with opportunities for designing lessons that included adaptations for the ELLs. Such opportunities were severely limited by the imposed district curriculum and testing schedule. This created a mismatch between our expectations and actual opportunities for the teachers to adapt their teaching in response to our instruction. We had mistakenly assumed there would be ample opportunity for the teachers to integrate theoretical and academic concepts into their day-to-day practices more smoothly. The numerous constraints faced by the teachers forced us to rethink our strategies for a "context-sensitive" program.

Instructional Support Visits—Gaining Access

We provided in-class support to assist the teachers in transferring the knowledge and training they received in their courses to their classroom practice on a day-to-day basis. Cultivating relationships based on trust for the Instructional Support Visits (ISVs) was the cornerstone of the approach we took with the teachers. Our perception of our job was to develop relationships with them from the beginning that would facilitate integration of the instructional content of the teacher education classes into their day-to-day teaching practice. During the first round

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of instructional support visits, we noted the number of ELLs in the classroom, their seating locations, their language backgrounds, their gender and any additional information that would help us to better understand them and the teachers' interactions with them.

We believed that the ISVs would not be effective unless they incorporated the teachers' opinions regarding enhancements to the program. This meant turning all ears to the teachers for their insights, comments and feedback, which was based upon previous and developing levels of practical expertise accumulated from their context. Johnson (2002) stresses the importance of context for successful teacher educator-teacher collaborations when she states, "the particular content and structure of any teacher education program must be decided locally" (p. 1). One of the teachers remarked in an e-mail message that the ISVs would be useful if they could be more closely linked to their course assignments. Our response to this feedback provided us with an opportunity to better match the ISVs to the needs of the teachers. Because the situational constraints of standardized testing schedules and varying teacher roles and interpersonal relationships precluded developing a single, rigid system for the ISVs, we responded by restructuring our visits to tailor them to the teachers' schedules, course content, and personal concerns (see Appendix B). The redesigned ISV format was made available to teachers through their course website.

Another noteworthy element of the ISVs involved facilitating the teachers' process of re-envisioning their practical knowledge as theory-building knowledge, according to the post-method practioner's framework. Our rationale for employing this framework as the cornerstone of our program reverberates in Johnson's (2002) commentary about teacher theory: "when teachers are given multiple opportunities to theorize about their work, their theories become the basis for how they understand and respond to the social interactions and shared meanings that exist within their classrooms" (p. 8).

Upon the completion of several ISVs using the new approach, we were better able to observe the ways teachers were integrating strategies learned in the courses into their classroom practice. These observations were formed, in part, during phone interviews conducted with the teachers after each ISV. The excerpt below from an ISV debriefing telephone interview describes the process one teacher goes through as she develops a deeper understanding of the challenges facing ELLs in her classroom.

- Marion: You know one of the things I'm learning from I guess the coursework from this year and in general from being a teacher, you know when you when you label a kid ESOL it's very quick to - not from somebody of your pedigree of course but somebody like me who has a tacit knowledge of language differences and stuff - it's very easy to assign all differences to the language...
- James: Right.
- Marion: And what I'm finding is on a practical sense that it's probably just not true.
- James: Yeah.

Marion: You just have kids of all different personalities. You have kids who are first-generation you know English speakers who are unmotivated. You have first-generation English speakers who you know struggle in reading and stuff. And I wonder if sometimes the ESOL label kind of obscures that in some sense or kind of camouflage what the other problems are.

James: Sure.

This teacher draws on her practical knowledge as she challenges the popular but misguided notion that ELLs' difficulties can typically be attributed to language problems. At the same time, she positions the instructor as the expert and herself as being a less credible theory-developer, which we felt limited her potential for theory-building. Even so, this teacher's comments point to the significant role of the ISVs. They created a space for dialogue that affirmed teachers' processes of theory development from their localized, practical knowledge. This dialogue seemed to be a product of our continual emphasis on relationship-building during interactions with the teachers. Moreover, through this example and others, we gradually discovered that the teachers' attitudes towards ELLs were changing and developing in favorable directions.

As a result of engaging in ample and open dialogue with the teachers, we were able to integrate the teachers' voices into the program by adapting course assignments and curricula in response to some of their expressed concerns and needs. Furthermore, there were a number of occasions in which informal hallway talk facilitated friendly, relationship-building rapport. We observed a change in the teachers after we had had a chance to teach one teacher education class and conduct one round of support visits. This was evident because of the lower number of cancellations and changes in schedule issues, as well as favorable e-mail response times and other issues related to the type of communication conducted during informal conversations. For example, several teachers began sharing various aspects of their personal lives with us and we felt as though we were getting to know them at a deeper level. This rapport went a long way toward their acceptance of course assignments which they had earlier resisted. Several teachers commented about previous assignments during ISVs. The following comments appeared in a teacher journal written by one of the authors. Some of the resistance seemed related to the sheer workload of the courses such as these:

I honestly can't understand how your program can expect me to do so much reading and writing because I'm a full-time teacher.

How am I going to find enough time to complete the assignments she's giving us?

Other comments reflected resistance about the changes we were asking them to make to their classroom practice. During the second round of ISVs, however, trust began to develop, which led to a much different atmosphere and an adjusted approach and orientation toward the visits. A segment from a journal entry that one instructor wrote after ISVs indicated the optimism felt toward the second round of classroom visits:

I felt so much more welcome in both classrooms today than I had in the past that the teachers really had a more working-with-me-attitude than I had been experiencing in the last round of visits (Journal entry, March 16).

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The attitude reflected in this entry illustrates a feeling of success in attempts to build relationships with the teachers. This experience of success was reflected in an increased number of comments about the usefulness of the ISVs. Several examples from post-ISV interviews serve to illustrate this point. In response to questions about ISV effectiveness—Does it actually help you? Do you feel like you're making more of a connection with the English language learners? the two following answers reflected similar responses from the majority of the teachers.

Yes, because if I go into my book and they look in the curriculum guidelines, if you look under shapes and it even tells you what, it will say certain things to do with the ESL kids for shapes. But you don't even always have to think of the sayings on your own. There's a lot of materials, but that I never really looked at you know. I never looked at that stuff that said what to do because you know I just went along and did whatever. So now I keep looking at that and I keep looking at the book of articles with this kind of thing that has a lot of ideas in it. Just go to the checklist and see. So, it does make you a lot more aware of what you are supposed to be doing and then you can always kind of have that in the back of your mind and you know who the students are. (Post-ISV Interview, 4/2/05)

I kind of hate having people come because I just know that I'm not being too self-critical. I just know that there is so many things we teachers can do to support these kids. You know, the numbers, and the size, and the logistics and everything, you know. You're seeing us try to do the best we can although obviously I know a lot of changes that we can make and hopefully I know next year we will have a fresh start and a chance to absorb a lot of the coursework from this year. Hopefully there will be some good changes. (Post-ISV Interview, 3/30/05)

To recapitulate, comments such as these helped us to define programmatic success in terms of what we hoped the teachers were cultivating from the ISV and how they connected to the overall partnership. We also found that encouraging these teachers to gradually relinquish apprehension about allowing outsiders to observe their classrooms on a regular basis required genuine interest in their personal and professional lives as they related to ours and our mission.

Limitations to “Theorizing from Practice and Practicing what is Theorized”

Thus far we have examined the impact that program enrollment had on the teachers by reflecting on how our attempts at relationship-building fostered a positive change in their responses to the program and in their classroom practices. In this section we will examine more deeply the relationship between the instructors and the teachers, and specifically how the curriculum transformed as a result of feedback from the teachers. We will also discuss how the teachers' theories of learning informed the design of the four courses. Additionally, we will discuss the varied assumptions and expectations of all parties involved in the program.

At the onset of the program, we quickly became aware of the divergent assumptions and expectations for teaching and learning that existed between ourselves and the teachers. As stated previously, to integrate our philosophy of teaching as it relates to the development of teacher

education we drew upon Kumaravadivelu's (2001) post-method pedagogy. The three parameters of the post-method pedagogy manifested in a variety of ways; in particular, the teachers demonstrated a preference for learning the way they teach, they resisted some course activities, and there were divergent notions of what learning should look like in the classroom. These findings present questions about the extent to which the post-method paradigm can be effective for teacher educators. This will be discussed in more detail in the conclusion.

In our attempt to deliver a context-sensitive teacher education program, we discovered several limiting factors not under our control. The limitations we discuss below are crucial for teacher educators to consider when designing school-based programs. First, our program's structure was determined by fiscal year and funding constraints. Specifically, this meant that after we were notified of our grant award in July we had just two months to select schools and participants, adapt course syllabi (Appendix C) and materials, and fine-tune plans for in-class support and research. Moreover, since our funding was restricted to a one-year timeline, we reduced each of the four semester-long courses to eight weeks. Our funding limited us to just one instructor assigned to provide in-class support. Early on, we realized that providing 18 teachers with in-class support several times in one eight-week course period was virtually impossible if we sought to maintain well-structured, substantive classroom visits followed by lengthy one-on-one debriefings between the teacher and the instructor. The school district's mandated curriculum, 30-student classrooms and limited classroom space restricted teachers' flexibility in attempting to implement course concepts and strategies, as did a total of four weeks of standardized testing. Possibly the greatest institutional constraint we experienced was associated with the structure of the ESOL Program in the two schools. Because ELLs were routinely pulled out of the participating teachers' classrooms, teachers' attempts to integrate them into classroom activities were frequently frustrated.

There were also unexpected limitations from the teachers' perspectives. Analysis of course evaluations revealed a number of themes regarding the teachers' assumptions about learning. Primarily, they did not seem to view the theoretical perspectives in assigned readings as valid, and placed more emphasis on course material they interpreted as being practical. Moreover, many felt that the standards set by the course instructors and the amount of work required for the courses were excessive. In response to the course evaluation question, "What was the most challenging aspect of the course?", 14 out of the 18 teachers responded "course readings." Specific comments include the following: "The readings, too much work, especially considering full-time teachers"; "less methodology-educational philosophy more practical applications and discussion"; "in essence a project a week plus readings!" These comments reveal that the teachers did not expect course assignments that would require them to step outside of their parameter of practicality. The teachers expressed dislike for course readings that included abstract, unfamiliar terms and concepts, expressing preference for aspects of readings they felt they could apply directly to their everyday classroom practices. Peters (2002) also found that "in schools the valuing of the immediate and practical over the theoretical, and some teachers' perceptions that professional development should only occur between school hours, meant there was a lack of interest in some of the reading and writing activities that the university participants saw as important" (p. 238).

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In response to the question, “What would you like to see more of in the future?” 12 out of 18 teachers expressed a preference for modeling of methods and assignments. Specific responses included the following: “experienced teachers to visit and model lessons”; “More modeling and a clearer understanding of what I should be learning—more teacher sharing”; “cooperative learning activities, films with modeling.” While we felt that we modeled the methods clearly, the teachers wanted explicit step-by-step instructions. Similarly they wanted to see samples of proposed assignments. For example, one teacher commented “I want to be taught the way I teach my students.” With this comment, this teacher inadvertently shifted power to herself because she was positioning herself as the model she wanted us to draw on for our own teaching. At the same time, this comment could be interpreted as “self-marginalizing” because it suggests a resistance toward experiencing an approach other than that which is familiar. Our erroneous assumptions were that the content of the courses would inform their current practices and that teachers would easily be able to integrate and apply what they read. The teachers assumed that we would provide more guidance throughout this process. This mismatch created a separation between us and the teachers and limited our collaboration.

Another limitation to an effective collaboration was the difference between the ways we conceived of the role of an ESOL teacher and the ways our participants conceived of this role. One teacher commented, “I still don’t feel like I can walk into an ESOL classroom and know what to do.” This comment suggests something about constructions of ESOL students, of the ESOL classroom, and of this teacher’s construction of an ESOL teacher’s knowledge. For this teacher, the nature of an ESOL classroom and the nature of an ESOL teacher’s knowledge remained outside the realm of her own experience and knowledge. In a sense, ESOL classrooms and teachers remained marginalized in the mind of this teacher. This notion was echoed by comments from other teachers who initially constructed the populations of ELLs in their schools as a single entity that should be approached with a one-size-fits-all approach to instruction. This mimics the all-too-common view that ELLs represent a homogeneous group that should be taught using “ESL methods”, which are somehow distinct from other teaching methods (Zamel, 1995).

In many ways, the teachers’ “culture of learning” was vastly different from that of the teacher educators. One teacher posted the following on a course discussion board:

Honestly, I immediately thought of the culture of learning that I am experiencing in this course and how hard it must be for ELLs to be thrown into a proficient grade with basic or no knowledge on the subject matter. When you come to think of it, I know that most of the material we have encountered, the tedious new vocabulary, dense reading, and foreign names are all more than new to me...I feel like an ELL thrown into a classroom with teachers who are Ph.D candidates and have high expectations of us to catch on to monotonous concepts and breeze through overwhelming readings.

This teacher draws out what we feel is the essence of university-school collaborations: Two worlds merging into one. Her statement also reflects her resistance to perceived gaps between theory and practice, culture and learning, and content knowledge versus personal knowledge. We believe that these perceptions often impede university-school collaborations. While it is true that university collaborators come from a world completely different than that of in-service teachers, and that each party has different goals, divergent needs, and varying expectations, in order to achieve the parameter of possibility both parties must critically learn what it means to exist in the others' parameter of practicality. Again, this was the essence of our struggles throughout this collaboration.

The sense of being overwhelmed by the workload led some teachers to focus on struggling for good grades. For example, one teacher posted the following comment to a course on-line discussion board after receiving a "B" grade on a paper: "Does it all come down to grades?" Moreover, while talking with a researcher, another teacher stated, "I found myself fighting for a grade" as he described his efforts to keep up with course readings and assignments. We believe that focusing on "the grades" provided the teachers with a feeling of success and security in the midst of a very challenging experience. Unfortunately, this feeling led to the construction of content as *static*, not *dynamic* and as something they felt they did not (and perhaps could not) own. As Kennedy (1991) observes, "teachers, like other learners, interpret new content through their existing understanding and modify and reinterpret new ideas on the basis of what they already know and believe" (p. 2). What Kennedy does not address is the complexity of this process when teachers are immersed in a new, specialized discipline. A related dilemma we experienced involved walking the tightrope between giving teachers too much content and appropriating their reflections. Too much of the former often meant they were overwhelmed. Too much of the latter often meant they felt they weren't learning enough about how to teach ELLs. We learned that to successfully implement a program of this nature, universities must account for the complexity of teachers' socialization into a new discipline. Neither we nor the teachers initially conceived of the program as an introduction to the field of TESOL, but their continual statements of being "overwhelmed" could be consistently traced back to entering a new discipline. Frustration came, for example, from struggles to understand new terminology, the amount of readings, and the fact that several teachers felt they needed to "know what an ESOL teacher does." We felt the last of these frustrations was impossible to address without encouraging the illusion of a one-size-fits-all approach to teaching ELLs. Taken together, these frustrations suggest that teacher educators must offer more guidance as teachers integrate course concepts into their current teaching practices. The teachers' frustrations also suggest that university participants should be sensitive to the power imbalance often inherent in university-school collaborations (Sandoval, 2001). Because we designed and directed the program and were knowledgeable about the course content, we were most certainly in the more powerful position.

Conclusion

Two salient constructs that emerged from our reflections on our implementation of this program were knowledge construction and power. As Freeman (2002) puts it, “any knowledge depends on a plurality of views, reflects a relativity of position in establishing those views, and can be promoted or ‘silenced’ depending on how power is used” (p. 8). Freeman applies a postmodern perspective to knowledge in teacher education and this, he argues, forms the basis of the current paradigm for teacher education (p. 8). The success of our collaboration in a school-based ESL teacher training program ultimately correlated with the extent to which we were able to facilitate a plurality of views. The limitations had to do with conceptions of what counted as knowledge, who owned which types of knowledge, and which types of knowledge were open for sharing.

The extent to which this program was successfully designed and implemented is evident when considering the overwhelming number of positive responses on course evaluations. When evaluating the final course, one teacher remarked, “this should have been the first class in the series of four,” and went on to say during a later interview that the practical nature of having the teachers conduct their own inquiry and connect to the lives of their students, their students’ families, and the school culture is something that should be completed at the beginning of the school year and not at the end. Also, we perceived an improvement in the quality of the assignments the teachers submitted for the final course as compared to those submitted in earlier courses. Interestingly, this occurred despite the fact that the teachers expressed a significant amount of resistance toward completing the assignments. These examples illustrate the parameter of practicality: seeing the teachers’ responses to this course, we came to believe that the teachers were beginning to see the purpose for developing their own local theories to address the teaching and learning needs of their individual ESL students.

We attribute much of this success to our approach towards relationship building and positive rapport. In the instructional support visits and day-to-day conversations, we did our best to be genuine listeners to the teachers as they shared their problems and thoughts about the teaching and learning process, while emphasizing elements of trust and care. This approach directly relates to the parameter of particularity in Kumaravadivelu’s (2001) work. Although we had originally assumed that the original approach to the ISVs would encourage more dialogue about theory building, in responding to the numerous constraints of the institution we learned to adopt an even more context-sensitive approach.

Finally, we were continually reminded that self-reflection is crucial for teacher educators. Teacher educators must find consistent ways to observe and interact with teachers before programs are developed. Conducting in-depth needs analyses allows university partners in such collaborations to intimately understand the needs of teachers and thus truly offer practical solutions to everyday problems. Teachers are constantly facing pressures such as testing, discipline issues, overcrowded classrooms, and standards, in addition to a myriad of sociopolitical factors that influence their day-to-day teaching. All of these factors must be considered by university participants. In order to develop successful collaborations both parties must view the process as an ongoing negotiation. They must also respectfully engage in interactions that validate each others’ expertise and experiences, hence both parties must learn to listen and listen to learn.

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Appendix A Classroom Observation Notes

Pre-observation Notes:

Instructor: _____

Observer: _____

Time and place:

for the observation : _____

for the follow-up meeting to discuss the observation: _____

Instructor's goals for the class being observed:

-
-
-

The instructor asks the observer to pay special attention to:

-
-
-

Observation Notes:

Time

Observations

Impressions/Questions to ask

Immediate Post-Observation Questions

General Questions:

Was this a typical class?

What was your impression of how it went?

What's your impression of how well you achieve your goals for the class?

Specific questions (based on observation notes):

-
-
-

Assessment of Teaching. Retrieved October 15, 2005 from University of Washington, Center for Instructional Development and Research Web Site: <http://depts.washington.edu/cidrweb/ObsNotes.html>

Appendix B

Hi Shartriya & James,

Maria Denny called and gave me some feedback on the structure of the in-class visits. It was very helpful. She said she feels they would be more productive if they were more closely integrated into the courses, which is something both of you have also expressed an interest in. At the same time, I realize it's been extremely difficult to visit 18 teachers once or twice within just an 8-week period (especially when you're technically supposed to be working 20 hours a week as TAs). As a result, I'm thinking about the following changes for the visits:

1. Schedule visits with each teacher one week in advance. Allow the teacher to select the class he/she would like you to visit.
2. The teacher should then plan a lesson for that class that integrates some aspect of the current course material (and of course a lesson that is aligned with the curriculum). He/she should be the one to select this aspect, although you could provide guidance if it's requested. For visits that happen during the 616 course, we could encourage them to implement one of the lessons the teacher already plans to use for the lesson set assignment.
3. The teacher sends you a brief e-mail the day before the visit (or simply sometime before the visit) to let you know what he/she would like feedback on after the visit (we'll have to coach them on what this could look like. They should be fairly specific with this. This serves as a guide for you, but it also serves as a pre-reflection for their implementation of the lesson).
4. You observe the lesson for the purpose of giving the feedback that the teacher has requested.
5. Hold a debriefing session at a mutually convenient time either in person or via telephone during which you do the following:
 - a) Respond to the requested feedback
 - b) Ask the teacher to come up with at least one additional comment or question regarding another aspect of the lesson
 - c) Respond to that additional comment
 - d) Ask the teacher what kinds of follow-up he/she might do as a result of this reflection (i.e. changes to future lessons, teaching approaches, strategies)

It will be important to keep these sessions very focused so that the teacher has the opportunity to engage in an in-depth reflection of the identified issue instead of talking about several issues in a more "surfacy" manner.

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What do you think about this?

I wish I had thought to come up with something like this sooner. I think the teachers generally feel supported during the in-class visits, but this possible change will make them more productive and tied to the coursework.

A very important point – because this approach may be more time-consuming it might be better to try to meet each teacher just once during each course. Does this seem doable? Do you have suggestions for making changes to the structure?

Thanks!

Jill

Appendix C

Sample Course Syllabus

Context, Culture and Language Teaching

TESOL 620/Spring 2005

Instructor: James Perren

E-mail: jperren@temple.edu

Tel: 267-265-4490

Course Dates: April 28-June 14, Thursdays, 3:30 PM –6: 00 PM

Office hours: By appointment

Blackboard Site: TESOL 620

Course Description:

In what many have called “post-methods era,” this course addresses several other-than-methods issues that are important for language teachers by looking closely at the ways that context and culture influence language teaching. The course focuses on the interplay of classroom “cultures” and the societies in which particular classrooms are located. Throughout the semester, the course emphasizes teacher inquiry and the value of contextualized accounts of what happens in classrooms. In particular, the course emphasizes teacher inquiry as a way of studying how ELL students’ home languages and cultures can influence teaching practice in beneficial ways. Through this course, students will investigate connections and disconnections between classroom and school contexts and their ELL students’ home contexts. They will accomplish this by first conducting an investigation of their own classroom contexts in order to define and describe this “culture of learning.” They will then embark on a project that will guide them through an investigation of the home “culture of learning” of an ELL student’s family.

ESOL 620 Competencies

By the end of this course students will be able to demonstrate the following:

- Knowledge of current methods and techniques, based on recognized principles of teaching English as a Second Language (ESL), in working with culturally and linguistically diverse students/families.
- Knowledge of available all-school support services that can assist the ELLs in language acquisition/content learning.
- Knowledge to promote parental/family involvement and participation regarding their children's accomplishments and educational needs and to assist in the development of ELLs projected services.
- Knowledge of behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes of multicultural and multilingual learners and families.
- Knowledge of how to facilitate the English Language Learners (ELLs), and their families, in understanding and collaborating with ESL and other school staff.
- Knowledge of how to promote school staff's understanding and sensitivity toward cultures other than American and languages other than English.
- Knowledge of how other cultures compare/relate to the American culture in areas as communities, businesses, languages, education, and systems in other countries.

Course Requirements & Assignments

Attendance and Class participation 10 %

For this course to be successful, it is essential for all students to keep up with course readings, be on time, attend all classes, and be actively involved in class discussions and activities. If you cannot attend a class or will be late, you must notify me immediately (267-265-4490). Only an emergency or illness will merit an excused lateness or absence. *Each unexcused lateness will bring your grade down 5 points. Each unexcused absence will bring your grade down 10 points.*

Weekly Reading Reaction 15%

Students must submit 3 separate, one-paragraph-long *reading reactions* and 3 separate one-paragraph-long *on-line discussion reactions* to the 620 Blackboard Discussion Board over the course of the semester. You must post these reactions to the 620 Blackboard Discussion Section before noon the day before each class. In the *reading reactions* you should address the following questions: What are the practical implications of these readings? How might these readings inform my day-to-day teaching? In the *on-line discussion reactions*, you should respond to a course-related issue of importance to you. In particular, you are encouraged to respond to previous posts from your classmates. You will be evaluated on the quality and quantity (at least one paragraph) of your reaction AND that you posted it to the designated 620 Blackboard Discussion Section on time.

Response papers (1) and Leading Class Discussions (2) 15 %

Each student will select one of the course readings and will write one, 1-2-page response paper and lead a 30-minute class discussion/activity. This means that for each class except the final day, three students will write response papers for that day's readings and post the response paper – as an attachment *and* pasted in the body of the message – to the class Discussion Board area on Blackboard by noon the day before class (if you are writing a response paper, then you are excused from writing a reaction for that day). Each paper should be *1-2 pages, double-spaced, with 1" margins, in 12-point font (approximately one page should summarize the main points of the readings and one page should be a response or critique)*. Each student will then lead an individual 30-minute class discussion involving his/her assigned reading. The point is not to give an exhaustive account of each of the reading, but to provide a brief overview of the key ideas and to pose questions and problems to stimulate class discussion. The discussion leader(s) should also be concerned with how best to engage a class. I encourage you to organize the classroom creatively by designing activities, bringing discussion questions and using small groups or pairs. The discussion leader(s) should also guide the class to connect the readings to each other and to the ideas previously introduced in the course. **Required one-time (per student) assignment.**

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Classroom Inquiry Assignment**30%**

For this assignment students will investigate the interaction (teacher-student & student-student) that occurs in their classrooms, paying particular attention to interaction that includes ELLs. The readings and discussions on May 5 will begin to prepare students for this assignment. The rationale for this assignment is it will provide students with the opportunity to look closely at their interactions with students and how these interactions might facilitate language and content learning for ELLs. Steps involved in this assignment are as follows:

1. After reading about classroom interaction in the course readings for May 5, decide what kind of interaction in your own classroom you'd like to know more about. Then, come up with one research question that will guide your inquiry. Examples of research questions will be discussed during class. Classroom inquiry research questions are due May 12.
2. Audio-record or videotape 10-15 minutes of interaction in your classroom. Then, transcribe the tape. Students are encouraged to videotape, simply because doing so presents more opportunity for learning. A student who videotapes a lesson is not required to show the tape to anyone else. Dr. Swavely Gardner will provide equipment and assistance for videotaping if you contact her at jmswav@temple.edu.
3. Analyze the transcript for the purpose of answering your research question. Examples of transcript analysis will be reviewed and discussed during class.
4. Write a 4-5-page paper that addresses the following questions:

What was your research question? Why was this an important question for you to answer?

To what extent were you able to answer your research question? Support this discussion with multiple examples from your transcripts. Keep in mind that it's okay if you weren't able to answer your question. This, by itself, often presents the best learning opportunity.

What did you learn from this investigation in terms of the following: a) Needs of your ELLs; b) Your own teaching practices?

Home & Community Assets Inquiry**30%**

For this assignment, students will select one ELL student and will investigate potential home & neighborhood resources by becoming familiar with that student's home and neighborhood. The final paper that will result from this investigation will have three main parts.

1. Conduct a home visit and parent/guardian meeting: You will schedule a home visit to meet with your student's parent/guardian for approximately 30 minutes (or more, depending upon the circumstances). During this visit you will interview the parent/guardian to get his/her perspective on your school, the child's education, the educational support he/she and other family members provide to the child. Keep in mind that this visit is quite different from a parent-teacher conference. During the latter, your role is to *give* parents information about their children's progress in school. During the former, your role is to *listen and to gather information* about the resources that exist in this child's home. You can either audio-record this interview or take very detailed notes. It is very important that you document the conversation, as this will serve as the basis for your paper.
2. Provide a detailed description of the neighborhood in which your student lives (you determine the boundaries of this neighborhood). In particular, you should focus on the assets of this neighborhood and the ways in which it supports your student's linguistic, cultural and familial identities. Remember: your classmates are your primary audience. What would help them understand the neighborhood where their students live and how resources in this neighborhood contribute to who they are?
3. Write a 6-8-page paper that addresses the following:
 - What is the parent's/guardian's perspective toward the school?
 - What "funds of knowledge" exist in the student's home and neighborhood?
 - What are the matches and mismatches between the home and school "cultures of learning"?
 - Among these matches and mismatches, which facilitate and impede the student's learning?
 - What classroom adaptations/teaching approaches might address these mismatches?

This assignment provides you with the opportunity to:

- Make connections between real life experience and academic learning
- Learn new strategies for communicating with parents
- Get to know a student's family
- Learn about another culture
- Learn about language learning and teaching from the perspective of a student's family
- Get to know a neighborhood outside the immediate school setting

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It is our hope that we can share your final papers with educators inside and outside of the School District of Philadelphia in order to expand professional development.

Summary of Requirements/Grading

Course readings/Attendance/Participation	10%
Weekly Reactions	15%
Response papers and leading class discussions	15%
Classroom Inquiry Assignment	30%
Teacher Inquiry Project	30%

Course Guidelines/Expectations:

- An “A” assignment is an exceptional one. It is not an assignment that merely meets the requirements outlined in the syllabus. All written work is graded on thoroughness, quality of analysis, level of support from data and/or research literature, organization and clarity.
- All assignments should be turned in on the day they are due unless permission is granted by the instructor *before* the due date. This kind of permission is only granted in unusual situations. When an extension has not been granted, grades on assignments will be lowered one half grade for each day they are late.
- Learning in this class will require your active participation. There are many ways to participate in class; actively listening, asking questions, commenting on the thoughts of others, or discussing tentative, speculative ideas are valued as much as stating original, completely formed thoughts.
- It is very important that you let the instructor know if you have questions about the concepts being discussed during the course. Feel free to use e-mail and/or phone calls to pose questions if raising them in class is difficult.

Schedule of Topics/Readings/Assignments

1. Thursday, April 28 Course Introduction

- What is “context”? What contexts are students familiar with?
- What are some connections and disconnections between home and school contexts?
- Summary of Cortazzi and Jin's “Cultures of Learning” framework and its use for guiding classroom, school, and home culture teacher inquiry
- Sign up for response papers and leading class discussions
- Cortazzi, M. & Jin, L. (1996). “Cultures of learning: Language classrooms in China” In H. Coleman (Ed.) *Society and the Language Classroom*, pp. 169-206. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

2. Thursday, May 5 **Understanding Classroom Inquiry & How ELLs' Classroom Participation Facilitates Second Language Development**

Required Readings:

1. Mercer, N. (2001). Language for teaching a language. In Candlin, C. & Mercer, N. (Eds). *English language teaching in its social context: A reader*, pp. 243-257. (ELTSC)
2. Gibbons, P. (2001). Learning a new register in a second language. In Candlin, C. & Mercer, N. (Eds). *English language teaching in its social context: A reader*, pp. 258-270. (ELTSC)
3. Willet, J. (1995). Becoming first graders in an L2: an ethnographic study of L2 socialization. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29 (3), 473-503. Part 1- Theory and methods (473-480)
4. Slimani, A. (2001). Evaluation of classroom interaction. In Candlin, C. & Mercer, N. (Eds). *English language teaching in its social context: A reader*, pp. 287-303. (ELTSC)

Suggested Reading:

1. Van Lier, L. (2001). Constraints and resources in classroom talk: Issues of equality and symmetry. In Candlin, C. & Mercer, N. (Eds). *English language teaching in its social context: A reader*, pp. 90-107. (ELTSC)

3. Thursday, May 12 **Student Perspectives on School & L1 Use as a Resource**

Classroom Inquiry Research Question Due

Required Readings:

1. Alfaro, M., Lornaliz, L., Santos, M., Villanueva, M. & Freeman, R. (2001). Our World. In J. Schultz & A. Cook-Sather (eds.) *In our own words: Students' perspectives on school* (19-38). New York: Rowman and Littlefield.
2. Olson, L. (1997). *Made in America: Immigrant students in our public schools* (90-105). New York: The New Press.
3. Cook, V. (2001) Using the first language in the classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 57 (3), 402-423.

Secondary Reading:

4. MacNeill, A., Perren, J., & K. Sullivan (1998). Promoting English use in the EFL classroom. *1998 Conference Proceedings*, Japan Association of Language Teachers (JALT).

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4. Thursday, May 19 Building Home/School Relationships by Learning from Parents and Families, Part I**Required Readings:**

1. Moll, C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N., (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into Practice* 31 (2) 132-144.
2. Hones, D. F. (1999). "Story weaving: Teacher Research with bilingual/bicultural family narratives" ERIC Document: ED 423 912.
3. Hidalgo, N. (1997) A layering of family and friends: Four Puerto Rican families' meaning of community. *Education and Urban Society*, 30(1) 20-40.

5. Thursday, May 26 Building Home/School Relationships by Learning from Parents and Families, Part II

Bring classroom inquiry transcripts to class

Required Readings:

1. Gonzalez, N. (1995). "Educational innovation: Learning from household." *Practicing Anthropology*, 17, 3-9.
2. Weinstein-Shr, G. (1995). Learning from uprooted families. In G. Weinstein-Shr and E. Quintero (eds.) *Immigrant learners and their families: literacy to connect the generations*. (113-130) McHenry, Illinois: Center for Applied Linguistics and Delta systems.
3. McCaleb, S. P. (1997). *Building communities of learners: a collaboration among teachers, students, families, and community*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

6. Wednesday, June 1 Language Teaching and Context: Particularities of Classroom Contexts

Classroom inquiry Paper Due

Required Readings:

1. Ballenger, C. (1997). "Because you like us: The language of control," In *Class Acts: Teachers Reflect on their own classroom practice*, pp. 33-44. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Review, Reprint Series #29.
2. Martinez, E. S. (2000). "Ideological baggage in the classroom: Resistance and resilience among Latino bilingual students and teachers" In E. T. Trueba & L. I. Bartolome (Eds.) *Immigrant Voices In Search of Educational Equity*, pp. 93-107. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
3. Kubota, R., Gardner, K., Patten, M., Thatcher-Fettig, C., & M. Yoshida (2000). Mainstream peers try on English language learners' shoes: A shock language experience. *TESOL Journal*, winter (12-16).

7. Thursday, June 9 Cultures of Learning, Individual Students & Pedagogy

Required Readings:

1. Jacob, E. & Jordan, C. (1996). "Understanding minority education: Framing the issues" In *Minority Education: Anthropological Perspectives*, pp. 3-13. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Co
2. Kumaravadivelu, B. (2001). Towards a Postmethod Pedagogy. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35 (4), 537-560.

Suggested Reading:

3. Erickson, F. (1997). "Culture in society and in educational practices" In J. A. Banks & C. A. Banks (Eds.) *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives*, pp. 32-60. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

8. Wednesday, June 15 Presentations of Home & Community Assets Project

Home & Community Assets Project Paper Due by Thursday, June 24 in the Digital Drop Box.

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Grading Rubric for 1-2-Page Response Papers**1=not present****2=needs
extensive
revision****3=satisfactory****4=strong****5=outstanding****Insights and
ideas**

Provides a brief overview of key ideas in the reading					
Makes a substantive connection to at least one other course reading					
Poses at least two questions and/or problems for classmates to discuss					
Includes a brief description of one activity to help classmates think through key ideas/problems in the reading					
Paper is clearly-written, with few stylistic, grammatical and mechanical weaknesses					
TOTAL					

Reconfiguring the TESOL Methods Sequence

Kimberley Brown and Kimberly R. LeVelle
Portland State University, USA

Whether you are a physicist or professional language educator, there are risks involved in working with the familiar or pursuing the unknown.

This is how the story goes:

Slotin and the others were gathered in a laboratory performing an experiment known as “tickling the dragon’s tail.” The experiment involved creating the beginning of a fission reaction by bringing together two metal hemispheres of highly reactive, beryllium-coated plutonium. The trick was to bring the hemispheres close enough together without allowing them to touch. But on one fateful day - May 21, 1946 - after successfully “tickling the dragon’s tail” dozens of times before, the hemispheres touched, generating a vast flux of radiation.

Slotin’s reaction was to use his hands to separate the hemispheres. His body shielded the others from the neutrons that emanated from the plutonium. While the results proved fatal to him nine days later, he is credited with having saved the other seven scientists from an agonizing death. (Martin, 1999)

The people involved in this story were trained physicists who had performed experiments like this before. This time, however, something went awry. This is not dissimilar to the process undertaken to revise the TESOL Methods sequence at Portland State University. And, like the physicists who did not stop experimenting because of a terrible accident that befell one colleague, we are determined to continue tickling our own dragon’s tail.

Introduction

As more teachers of English with different backgrounds enter the field, it becomes even more important for the curriculum they study to be relevant to the variety of contexts in which they will teach. In response to these needs (see Graddol, 1997) we chose to reconfigure the TESOL methods sequence within our certificate and MA programs at Portland State University (PSU). This revision called for a rebalancing of theory and practice. In designing the new curriculum over a six-month period, the team of curriculum designers experienced both severe growing pains and what Kumaravadivelu (2003) terms a “perceptual mismatch” (p. 39). As a result, the revision process continues. The purpose of the present paper is to inspire and caution those who will attempt a similar revision.

In this paper, we outline the curricular revision of the teaching methodology sequence that took place in 2004-2005 in both the TESL certificate and TESOL MA programs at PSU. We describe our initial motivations for the former structure and contrast it with the revised curriculum. We discuss the challenges that arose in implementing these changes, the reactions of class participants in two terms of Methods I, and the clash of expectations and realities on the part of the participants and instructors. Finally we look towards the future, identifying activities we will engage in to reduce the pain of transformation in these contact zones.

Profile of Program

Portland State is a comprehensive urban university located in Portland, Oregon, U.S. It follows a quarter system: thus a typical course would be four credits and meet for roughly four hours per week for ten weeks. The TESOL program at Portland State consists of both an undergraduate certificate and a graduate MA program. Students in both programs attend courses together, with differing assignments and readings. The certificate program is 40 credits and the graduate program is 46 credits. The graduate program consists of roughly ten courses and six thesis credits. The thesis is required. Both programs have a required 70-hour practicum component consisting of observation, tutoring, and practice teaching. There are roughly 70 students per year completing the certificate and 25 students per year admitted to the MA program. Thus at any given time, there are typically 30 to 35 students in either TESOL Methods I or TESOL Methods II. Between one-fourth and one-third of the student population at any given time are international students, most often from Japan, China, and Korea. While many MA students have had significant teaching experience—more than two years—coming into the program, other students fit the profile of pre-service teachers, with very little prior experience, if any. The two Methods courses are among the most practical in their required sequence, and it is perhaps for this reason that student expectations for some type of “cookbook” are so high. For further information about the program, please see the departmental website at <http://www.ling.pdx.edu>.

The courses forming the core of the discussion in this paper are two terms of TESOL Methods I (LING 4/577). Primary course materials in Methods I consist of a required text, a recommended tutoring text, a packet of readings used in both Methods I and Methods II (see Appendix A for the packet Table of Contents), a required graduate text, and a required graduate packet focusing on English as an International Language (see Appendix B for the packet Table of Contents). Additional materials for Methods II include an extensive set of recommended texts (See Appendix C). The two Methods courses are required in both the certificate and the MA programs. Students take them after completing courses in second language acquisition and intercultural communication for the language classroom. For most students, completion of the Methods sequence occurs mid-program. As both programs required 70 hours of practice—observing, teaching, and tutoring—up to 50 of which are completed within the Methods classes, students generally have between 20 and 25 hours of required practice to complete after these two courses.

The Instructors

Three instructors work together to teach the Methods sequence. Kimberley Brown (referred to as Kim) is the Methods I professor, Brian Lynch is the Methods II professor, and Kimberly LeVelle (referred to as Kimberly) is the teaching assistant for both classes. All three worked together collaboratively (with support from other faculty in the department) to redesign the courses and create new course materials. Both Kim and Brian felt strongly that the teaching assistant's role was as an instructor in the class, and thus Kimberly taught several class sessions and created assignments. Both professors set up class dynamics so that each taught as co-instructor with the teaching assistant.

Motivation for Changes

The motivation for these changes was fortuitous. The timing seemed right to consider re-evaluating the sequence when one of the instructors, Brian Lynch, was sent a desk copy of Kumaravadivelu's (2003) text. We perused it and committed ourselves to using it as our base text in both Methods I and Methods II, in addition to a reading packet described below. Prior to this time, we had used Celce-Murcia (2001).

Our department was engaged in a university-wide assessment initiative that provoked a curricular discussion revolving around Applied Linguistics. Looking in the same direction, the instructors saw a place for change in the program. All three instructors were willing to engage in a new project redressing a perceived imbalance in the Methods I-II relationship, with Methods I being overly theory-based and II being overly practice-based. In Methods I, students were asked to complete both observation and tutoring hours, while actual practice teaching was reserved for Methods II. Students in Methods I did not seem to see observation and tutoring as necessary prerequisites for classroom teaching. Assignments they could clearly use outside the program, such as assembling a picture file, were reserved for Methods II.

As a team, we had not overtly discussed our own beliefs about theory and practice at any great length. Implicitly all of us were aware of the notion of praxis and in our own ways believed that this was what we were doing. However, none of us had recently examined the literature on pre-service teacher education, such as Moore (2004), who explicitly details all of the mismatches that can occur when pre-service teachers make their first move to the classroom. If we had done so, the pain of living through the perceptual mismatches that occurred over and over again in our classes might have lessened.

More than fifteen years ago, Ellsworth (1989) examined another perceptual mismatch between theories in critical pedagogy and actual practice. At that time, she suggested that critical pedagogy "has developed along a highly abstract and utopian line which does not necessarily sustain the daily workings of the education its supporters advocate" (p. 297). These dimensions of abstraction and utopian idealism characterize both how we approached Methods I and Methods II prior to the changes, and what happened when the changes were instituted.

Changes

As mentioned above, the methods sequence is at the heart of the program for both certificate and MA students. Given that central nature, it has been the focus of changes for the past few years. This year, we made changes to the class texts, assignments, and structure. We switched the primary text from Celce-Murcia's *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language* (2001) to Kumaravadivelu's *Beyond Methods* (2003).

The observation assignments in Methods I were changed from one generic form to five specific assignments focusing on different classroom aspects discussed in chapters in Kumaravadivelu, along with Strevens' (1987) description of the relationship between students, teachers, and systems. The classroom aspects discussed in Kumaravadivelu involved identification of type of teaching (e.g. passive technician, reflective practitioner, or transformative intellectual), teacher questions, learner autonomy, and affect in the classroom. Students were also asked to complete five additional observations using a generic form.

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Finally, students were asked to submit a Philosophy of Teaching assignment at the end of Methods I instead of at the beginning of Methods II. The assignment was revised to walk students through a step-by-step process, and included numerous recommended resources. Students wrote their philosophy of teaching statements before entering their teaching practice, but after engaging in extensive tutoring and observation. As with the original assignment, assessment criteria were clearly laid out (See Appendix D). In Methods II, we added short teaching “tips” at the beginning of each class, while focusing most of the class time on student-constructed teaching ideas and solutions to difficulties.

In the required course packet, roughly 10 readings out of 16 changed from the prior academic year. Within the reading packet, three readings were included that focused more on the processes of observation, teamwork, and the etiquette of observing. Students were also exposed to a “close reading” process contrasting two History of Methods articles with very different ideological perspectives (Brown, n.d. and Celce-Murcia, 2001). Most importantly, all three instructors made a firm commitment to work within the ideological parameters outlined in *Beyond Methods* (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). This involved commitments to better balancing theory and practice, to moving away from a cookbook approach to presentation of Methods, and truly drawing upon a Post-Methods perspective; and to involving students in co-creating and revising dimensions of the course. Through these large- and small-scale changes, theory and practice became balanced across the two classes and were integrated.

Kumaravadivelu (2006) defines Post-Methods as a paradigm shift that occurred in the late 1980s when a variety of scholars recognized it was neither possible to define one set of principles that would work in all contexts, nor accurate to suggest such a set of principles were neutral and without ideology. He proposed and has implemented a framework that lends itself to greater flexibility. It is centered around ten macrostrategies that form the organizational basis for the textbook we adopted. They are:

- a) maximize learning opportunities
- b) facilitate negotiated interaction
- c) minimize perceptual mismatches
- d) activate intuitive heuristics
- e) foster language awareness
- f) contextualize linguistic input
- g) integrate language skills
- h) promote learner autonomy
- i) ensure social relevance
- j) raise cultural consciousness. (p. 69).

Challenges

There are always risks involved in pursuing changes to an existing system. We believed that the challenges we faced would be nominal and not dissimilar to previous curricular revisions. As we went through the school year, we found that these challenges were neither nominal nor moderate. In fact, as students began skipping class, withdrawing from class discussion, and shutting down despite repeated attempts by the instructors to overtly examine the causes of their behaviors, our own anxiety became debilitating rather than facilitative. Kumaravadivelu (2003) terms these paradoxes “perceptual mismatches” (p. 39) and suggests that “only a concerted and cooperative effort on the part of the teacher and the learner will bring out the gap between teacher intentions and learner interpretations” (p. 99).

The first perceptual mismatch we encountered was between the text and the existing program: we have a TESOL Methods sequence, not a Post-Methods sequence. Students did not register for the course expecting Post-Methods. In addition to the sequence of methods courses, the other courses in our program are not configured to match the reconceptualization. We found that without a path from where we were to where we were going, we were not successful at helping our students work with the text or with other revisions.

We also found a perceptual mismatch between our expectations of the class and our students’ expectations. We entered the classroom envisioning students as willing, eager participants who would work at co-constructing the class with us. These students would be flexible, contributing their own ideas, searching out ways to BECOME a teacher instead of a formula for being one. We expected to be able to brainstorm ideas and involve students in creating and sharing innovations and failures. We expected that this search for becoming would be inspiring and challenging. Instead, we were challenged. As one student wrote:

I must admit that the class often feels repetitive and busy, yet contentless. When I’m feeling particularly cynical and frustrated, it seems as if I’m being force-fed nothing more significant than some trendy faux-radicalism for white academics...

Students expected the instructors to be well-versed in modern teaching methods and to know the “right” way to teach, writing comments such as, “I want to learn the effective Teaching Method” and simply “how to teach English” on intake assessment forms. They wanted to find out how to teach certain skills to certain subsets of learners. They also expected that they could learn the best method and successfully implement it across curricula, cultures, and contexts. They thought they would enter our classes and be told how to teach, and that their instructors would know the right answers. This disconnect led to major conflict in our classes.

Additionally, a perceptual mismatch existed within the text itself. The complete title of Kumaravadivelu’s book is *Beyond methods: Macrostrategies for language teaching*. For Kumaravadivelu, macrostrategies are paramount in language teaching. We see a disconnect between Kumaravadivelu’s stance on macrostrategies and his inclusion of extensive microstrategies in each chapter. Kumaravadivelu states, “the microstrategies section provides

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sample microstrategies that illustrate how to realize the goals of the particular macrostrategy in a classroom situation” (2003, p. 3). Unfortunately, while each microstrategy is a complete assignment and something a beginning teacher could adopt as is into their classroom, these microstrategies are only opaquely linked to particular macrostrategies, and some actually seem to violate the principles of the text.

One example is Microstrategy 5.1 (p. 124), entitled “Holiday shopping.” It is situated in a chapter titled “Facilitating negotiated interaction” and it does indeed require students to work together to produce language. Unfortunately, from our perspective, it also creates some problems in the classroom. The instructions have the teacher form the learners into small groups to “decide which items to buy as a holiday gift for their beloved teacher” (p. 124). He then reminds teachers to tell the students “this is only a pretend game”. More details on their gift limitations follow. We are concerned that such an activity, while not only encouraging consumerism (why shouldn’t the students be encouraged to decide what sort of present to make?), also leads to a particularly awkward situation if students get the impression they are supposed to buy a present (up to 100 dollars) for their instructor. The potential for miscommunication, especially with low level learners, seems large.

Microstrategy 12.2 (pp. 277-278) is “Thanksgiving” in a chapter titled “Raising cultural consciousness.” This activity takes students through some activities to compare and contrast Thanksgiving in the United States, in their home culture, and in another culture. Students interview or do research and create posters to show to the rest of the class. Finally, students write papers to share what they have learned about the other cultures and the similarities that exist amongst apparently diverse practices. We found this activity particularly worrisome because of its lack of discussion of those peoples who do not celebrate American or Canadian Thanksgiving, in particular Native Americans or First Peoples. This activity painted a complex holiday in a singularly good light, instead of taking an opportunity to have a rich discussion with students about different peoples’ histories in North America. Particularly in a chapter focusing on raising cultural consciousness, this absence of cultural sensitivity seemed surprising.

Finally, there was a mismatch between implementing transformative practices and our beliefs in them. There was a mismatch between our commitment to theories of transformation and our abilities to teach in this way. We entered the curricular revision process hopeful, enthusiastic, and motivated. We were all familiar with Kumaravadivelu’s characterizations of passive technicians, reflective practitioners, and transformative intellectuals. To some degree, these characterizations are presented on a continuum, with the author implicitly suggesting that being a transformative intellectual is somehow the most evolved state. In fact, it may not be possible for pre-service teachers to become transformative intellectuals without first experiencing being passive technicians and reflective practitioners. The activities in the book are neither stage appropriate nor sequential—they do not allow pre-service teachers to experiment, nor to analyze their behaviors as tutors or practice teachers. Rather, the activities are presented with high levels of abstraction or are simply added without context. Additionally, the book provides no guidance

for language teacher educators on how to integrate the text in their teaching. Each of us characterized our own teaching as falling somewhere on the continuum of reflective teaching to transformative teaching. The process of working through the realities of the situation, however, dampened much of this initial enthusiasm. As one student explained:

We are being presented the information as professional knowledge prepared and explained by experts; the explicit goal appears to be maximizing content knowledge through very highly prescribed activities; the classroom tends to be teacher centered; and the primary players in the teaching process are experts (the required readings) and the teachers. ... As it stands now, would anyone in the class dare not to agree with transformational philosophy except to temper it with questions of reality dictated by employer standards and requirements?

As Slotin and the other physicists knew, the same experiment can turn out quite differently with very small changes in the variables. In the next section we look specifically at the reactions of participants in the two terms of Methods I: Methods I Winter (taught during Winter term) and Methods I Spring (taught during Spring term).

In Methods I Winter, we were able to stay in a reflective space for the majority of the class, as evidenced by comments on course evaluations such as, “this class was hard. Not because of the amount of tasks, necessarily, but because the tasks required asked for a lot of self exploration and reflection and were set up in a way that provided for autonomy in the assignments.” For Methods I Spring, there was a striking lack of prose responses in the course evaluations, just as in class students had seemed reluctant to react to difficult ideas. The comments on course evaluations were very terse, in marked contrast to the course evaluations of Methods I Winter. On the course evaluations, there were three questions that called for written responses. There were approximately twice as many responses to the open-ended questions by Methods I Winter than by Methods I Spring. In retrospect, we realized that the relative silence of Methods I Spring students paralleled their silence in class.

Methods I Winter responded to the instructors’ examples and stories of teaching “failures” by writing, “I appreciate that Dr. Brown shared her story with us in the beginning of the class. It is good to remember that professional teachers are human and they also have different personal matters.” Another student commented, “[I] really liked your sharing thoughts on anxiety and emotion in the classroom setting.” Finally, a student wrote, “I appreciate the humanity of this class. When my teachers are real people with passions, vulnerabilities, beliefs, life experiences then I am free as a learner to make my own mistakes, have my own beliefs, carve my own learning space.” This discussion of failure during Methods I Spring did not spark any feedback or comments from the students.

All three instructors kept in regular conversation, both in person and electronically, to debrief class sessions and brainstorm possible resolutions and rationales for class issues. These conversations were a place for us to engage in our own search for understanding, as well as a safe space to try to cope with difficult days.

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In Methods I Spring, unlike in previous courses, instructors and students withdrew from class both physically and mentally. This reluctance to participate was surprising and worrisome. In an effort to improve the tense classroom environment and to strengthen class cohesion, we talked with members of the class who appeared remote and attempted team-building exercises.

Based on a private conversation with a graduate member of the class who had missed at least four hours of class and, on a previous occasion, had pulled a hat over her eyes and slumped down in her chair, we asked each student to describe one way they could be a resource to other class members, in hopes of increasing class solidarity and providing concrete resources. We also hoped this would help students begin to see each other as resources. Instead, students responded reluctantly and seemed unaware of their own skills and talents.

In Methods I Winter, Kim was willing to share information about traumatic teaching experiences with the class, and they responded greatly to her story. However, Methods I Spring was not safe enough for her as an instructor to share that same information and in fact, she was frustrated enough with classroom dynamics to write an e-mail to the class. The e-mail was not ultimately sent because both a former class instructor and the current co-instructor, Kimberly, felt it was too defensive. In order to demonstrate just how difficult the situation was for us, we include the e-mail in Appendix E.

The class atmosphere felt so toxic to co-instructor Kimberly that she approached Kim before class one day and confessed that she did not think she would be able to sit through class. Through tears, she explained that she felt vulnerable in class and that the students didn't seem to respect that vulnerability, so she no longer felt safe sharing with them. The instructors agreed that Kimberly would attend the beginning of class that day, but could leave at any time. She sat far outside the circle of students (so they wouldn't look at her) and didn't participate. Until this time, there had never been any occasion in Methods where either instructor felt reluctant to come into the classroom. In fact, the class camaraderie was generally quite strong, as indicated by a classroom culture that included themes and jokes. None of this developed in Methods I Spring.

In sum, Kumaravadivelu presents an exciting framework for language teacher education. However, his book did not help us figure out how to transform our existing program to more closely resemble his vision. The text is not laid out in such a way that the typical teacher educator could help students at different stages of development to use it efficiently, and by extension to begin to engage themselves as transformative intellectuals. Furthermore, if the teacher educator is herself new to transformative teaching, there is no path for how to teach teachers in a transformative way. We kept attempting to develop a sense of community among class participants, and we truly believed that using Kumaravadivelu's text would foster the action necessary to become a community of learners co-constructing the class. In trying to figure out why things kept falling apart, we turned to literature in pre-service teacher education.

Research in Pre-Service Teacher Education

As detailed above, in beginning this curricular revision process, all instructors were committed to tracking student reactions and attempting to draw upon research in both teacher education and applied linguistics to help interpret and account for changes that occurred. Thus, in a similar manner to the distinction between formative and summative evaluation, we undertook a review of the literature as a summative rather than formative activity. The research literature on pre-service teacher education is remarkably consistent: development of belief systems, the relationship of these systems to change and innovation, and the role of prior educational experience account for much of what occurred in the classes discussed in this paper.

Pajares (1992) suggests that there is insufficient research on pre-service teachers' knowledge and educational beliefs. He speculates about the reasons for not only the lack of research, but also the cost pre-service teachers may pay for switching beliefs:

Pre-service teachers are insiders. They need not redefine their situation. ... Thus, the reality of their everyday lives may continue, largely unaffected by higher education, as may their beliefs. For insiders, changing conceptions is taxing and potentially threatening. These students have commitments to prior beliefs, and efforts to accommodate new information and adjust existing beliefs can be nearly impossible. (p. 323)

Johnson (1994) draws on this research to examine language teacher preparation even as she acknowledges that research on pre-service language teachers “lags behind mainstream educational research in its attempts to understand the cognitive dimensions of second language teaching” (p. 440). In her extended case study of four pre-service teachers, she found that their former experiences as learners dominated their conceptualizations of themselves: their practice teaching experiences and other knowledge did not dissuade them from holding on to what in Freirean terms would be called “banking” education, i.e. “Traditional images of teachers as sources of knowledge and as figures of authority” (p. 449). Most of the pre-service teachers in our Methods I Spring course seemed to be firmly situated in that stage of intellectual development termed by Perry (1970) to be “Multiplicity Pre-Legitimate.” At this stage:

The student perceives diversity of opinion, and uncertainty, and accounts for them as unwarranted confusion in poorly qualified Authorities or as mere exercises set by Authority ‘so we can learn to find The Answer for ourselves.’ (p. 9)

Had we recognized this earlier on, it would have been possible for us to avoid some of the self-criticism we engaged in when things fell apart.

Yet another dimension of belief change comes from teacher education research in the area of World Englishes. Brown and Peterson (1997) looked at the types of conceptual changes that occurred when pre-service ESOL teachers were exposed to 0-4 hours of information regarding World Englishes, compared to the changes that occurred after 30+ hours of exposure. They found there was no difference between conceptualizations of students who were not exposed

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to World Englishes information at all in their teacher education program (0 hours) and those of students only briefly exposed to information (4 hours). However, students who were exposed to more than 30 hours of information demonstrated both “quantitatively and qualitatively richer knowledge structures” (p. 45). Because we had focused all term on the Post-Methods ideology promoted by Kumaravadivelu, we had assumed that students would sort of “come along,” much as they had in the World Englishes classes taught in this same program. This was absolutely not the case.

In instituting the curricular changes outlined above, particularly aligning ourselves with the Post-Methods conceptualization of Kumaravadivelu, we were cognizant that we were introducing a different intellectual paradigm. Diffusion of innovation research (Rodgers, 1983) has addressed variables that can account for success or failure. They include: compatibility, relative advantage, complexity, trialability, and observability (p. 233). While an expanded discussion of these concepts is beyond the scope of this paper (see Brown, 1993), it should be noted that there were clear perceptual mismatches between many of the beliefs the pre-service teachers brought with them to the course and those both introduced in the course and seen in the classroom practices of the experienced teachers whom our students observed. In retrospect, it is not surprising that we experienced severe growing pains in attempting to make these curricular revisions.

Finally, the roles of reflection and reflexivity on the part of pre-service teachers cannot be discounted in how they manage and process change. Calderhead (1991) suggests that students need to reflect on the relationship between personal beliefs and ideas held prior to participating in a teacher education program and then compare and contrast this information with that received in their programs. He goes on to suggest that simply engaging in practical experiences without being able to process and go over what has occurred is ineffective. In light of this, the revision of the observation assignments should have been helpful--in fact, even more processing in class about these observations should have been built in.

Moore and Atkinson (1998) review research on reflection in teaching and argue that it is important for pre-service teachers to draw upon their supervised classroom experiences in an organized and mindful fashion. For better or worse, we had assumed that our crafting of detailed observation assignments would give our pre-service teachers yet another well to draw from. We felt the assignments to be thoughtful, linked to the text, and capable of pushing the class participants to do more than simply take notes on the days they observed. Unfortunately, the reflections they turned in more closely resembled what Moore and Ash (2002, p. 4) term pseudo-reflection, defined as “a genuine intention to consider important issues identified or accepted by the student teacher... though not leading to development or change.”

Coldron and Smith (1999) look at the ever-changing nature of how a teacher positions him- or herself in social space. They suggest that it is important for teachers to construct “a sustainable identity as a teacher” (p. 714). Kumaravadivelu approaches the notions of sustainability and social space by looking at context. Our assumption had been that the intersection of the

students' examination of their past language learning experiences with completion of a set of assessments on learning style, training style, and language learning style would reinforce their integration of past and present experiences with future language teaching goals. Unfortunately, this goal was opaque both in the general setting of the class and in terms of microstrategies. In retrospect, perhaps we only pushed the students to engage in pseudo-reflection or reflection-in-action (Schon, 1987) as opposed to reflexivity (Qualley, 1997). Moore (2004) suggests that the problematizing of practice that occurs when one is truly reflexive is worth the cost, much as does Kumaravadivelu (personal communication, June 4, 2005), who has indicated that after being a few years out of school, most students are appreciative of the approach advocated in *Beyond Methods*. Unfortunately neither Moore nor Kumaravadivelu suggest how to assist students at the precise moment they experience failure, frustration, inadequacy, or simply fatigue with processing too many types of conflicting information.

We are trying now to determine what we can glean from this experience for the next time around. We are committed to the notion of a Post-Methods pedagogy because we believe it is more flexible and contextually relevant than earlier approaches. At the same time, we have come to believe in the importance of paving a path for our students—one that works with what they do know and where they are starting from, so they can develop the confidence to take risks. We are committed to working through the problems that have appeared in these classes rather than returning to the previous system. Thus, we have identified areas to focus on for our future classes.

In the future, we will move more slowly from where the class finds itself, toward the concepts and attitudes espoused in the texts and supplementary readings. For example, students have limited experience in reflection and analysis. They need support in learning how to do these tasks and in building their emerging awareness of themselves as professional language educators. Our task is to guide them in recognizing the importance of their own processes and in integrating their own reflections with their beliefs to understand the centrality of the latter in their professional practice. We must help students build their knowledge of learning styles and strategies, as well as their understanding of their prior beliefs, into their emerging model of the critical components of language teaching.

Many if not most of the students have no prior teaching experience; they need greater support to expand their understanding of practice and integrate knowledge from observations and tutoring into their student teaching. In the future, students will watch a short teaching demonstration video and take observation notes as a structured in-class activity before going out to conduct their own set of observations. Additionally, students will engage in more extensive class debriefings of their observations and tutoring.

We end this paper knowing that we are still tickling the dragon's tail. We are still engaging in the experiment and remain committed to the philosophy, to using the textbook, to the revisions that we have made, and to further revisions in the future. We share our story with you not to deter you from this kind of curricular innovation, but rather to encourage you to do so in a structured, developmentally appropriate manner.

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Appendix A

Packet Table of Contents

Course Packet Reference List

LING 477/577 and 478/578

Brown/Lynch

2004/2005

LING 477/577

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Appendix B

Grad Packet Table of Contents

Graduate Packet

LING 577 TESOL METHODS I

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Appendix C

Methods II Suggested Texts

Optional Texts:

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Appendix D

Philosophy of Teaching Statement Assignment

What is it?

The core values (personal) and teaching principles and ideas (from literature and experience) that you believe in including your theoretical orientation to language and language learning.

Purpose:

1. Think about your beliefs and values about teaching and learning.
2. Demonstrate your own values and beliefs to others and be able to compare them to an institution's.
3. Construct a statement of both the hows and whys of your teaching practice.
4. Develop a first draft of the philosophy statement required for your final portfolio.

Larger/Longer Term Purpose:

This is one part in a larger process. A Philosophy of Teaching Statement is the refined essence of who you are as a teacher, what values and beliefs you hold about teaching and learning, and how these are implemented in your classrooms. Just as you may use the same job history to craft different resumes for different jobs or at different points in your life, you may also use the same essence, the same values and beliefs, to create different Philosophy of Teaching Statements.

Assignment Requirements

1. 1-3 page paper (shorter is often better), typed, 12 point, double spaced
2. Use the 1st person- what do YOU do, not what “a teacher” should do
3. Aim for active rather than passive verbs, and present tense rather than past/future
4. Define your terms. If you say that you strive for a “learner centered classroom”- what does that mean? How do you “encourage” or “motivate” your students? [note that these are just example phrases...]

Assessment Criteria

To assess this assignment, we will be looking for:

1. Evidence of your personal values and ideas about successful language learning and teaching that have been developed from personal experience, observations, and coursework
2. Evidence for translation of these values into practice
3. Writing clarity, style, voice, tone
4. Overall quality and incorporation of assignment requirements

The Process:

- Look through your previous writing for this class—including Language Learning Narrative, Learning Styles and Strategies, Methods demos, observations, tutoring etc.
- Think about the information presented in SLA, Understanding the International Experience and other courses you have had.
- Reflect on what is important to you as a teacher and learner.
- Think about what details, evidence, examples illuminate these beliefs and values.
- How do you enact these beliefs?

Questions to Consider [Your Philosophy May Look at Any, All, or None of These]

- Why do I teach the way I do?
- Why am I a teacher?
- What motivated me to select a career path that includes teaching?
- What is my personal definition of a great teacher and what experience formed that definition?
- What do I believe about teaching and learning?
- What do I want my students to gain from my classroom?
- Why do I choose the teaching strategies/methods that I use?
- Why do I select particular assignments/experiences for my students?
- What metaphors for teaching and learning appeal to me? Why?
- What is teaching? What is learning?
- Where will I teach? Does this impact my philosophy or is it because of my philosophy?
- What experiences have led me to these ideas?

Appendix E

Kimberly's e-mail

I've read all the postings here, and I'm saddened that some of you feel that class is not a safe place to explore various ideologies. All of you will be making your own choices about how to structure your classes, how to respond to your students, and how to plan your curriculum. You can be a structuralist, a structural-functionalist, a marxist, a utopian, and succeed as a teacher. It's disturbing to me that some of you feel you cannot disagree with the author or myself. I've tried to model the places where I disagree with the author and suggest that this is an ongoing process just as he says, of observation, reflection, and action. [we have five classes left]. If you withdraw mentally, emotionally, or by not appearing in class, you are engaging in an activity that you would ask your students NOT to do. Avoidance will not get you, me or anyone else through the class, the text, or the space you need to get into for next term.

Was it Really Worth it? Chinese EFL Teachers' Perceptions of the Effects of an Off-shore Development Course on Their Teaching

*Clare Conway and Heather Richards
Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand*

The recent expansion of English language learning and teaching in China has resulted in many Chinese tertiary institutions wanting to gain professional development for their instructors outside China in an English-speaking environment. Shanghai has been at the forefront of the ELT reforms in the People's Republic of China (Hu, 2002). In 1993 the Shanghai Education Commission established a 10-year development program whereby 1500 to 1800 English language teachers would receive ELT training in overseas institutions (Hu, 2003). Our institution in New Zealand was part of this program and provided a course for eight Chinese teachers of English. We were interested to know what effect the in-service course in New Zealand would have on the Chinese teachers' classroom practice once they returned to China.

In this paper we outline the context of English language teaching and training in China, and describe the course we offered in New Zealand. We explain the methodology used to find out what the teachers transferred from the course in New Zealand to their classroom practice in China. We discuss the themes that emerged and make some suggestions for ways to enhance transfer of teaching knowledge into teaching practice.

English Language Teaching in China

It is difficult to generalize about English language teaching in China because of the vastness of the country, the differences between the large cities and the rural settings, as well as the rapid economic and social changes taking place. In spite of this, there are some common features in the education system which are worth noting: the increasing numbers of English language learners, the changes in approaches to teaching language, the general size of language classes, and the national exam system.

English language teaching in China has undergone considerable growth since the mid 1980s, especially at the post-middle school level. Much has been written about this expansion (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Hu, 2002, 2003; Li, 1999). In the 1990s there were an estimated 57 million students studying English at school and university and 150 million part-time students learning the language. This rapid expansion has led to a new focus within the curriculum where English is now being given greater prominence and is second only to Chinese and mathematics in terms of the allocated instruction time (Hu, 2002).

The expanding number of English language learners has been accompanied by new teaching methodologies. In 1992, the SEDC (State Education Development Commission) replaced the

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structural syllabus with a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) syllabus, and a series of textbooks was developed to support the new approach (Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Hu, 2002). Nine years later, the SEDC introduced Task-Based Language Teaching. These changes have resulted in continued debate about the place of new methodologies and the desirability and practicalities of imposing new approaches (Cheng & Wang, 2004; Cortazzi & Jin, 1996; Hu, 2005; Liao, 2004; Yu, 2001). Hu (2005) encourages teachers to take an eclectic approach:

Rather than impose CLT or for that matter any particular methodology on teachers, a more rational and productive stance to take is to encourage them to adopt an eclectic approach, and draw on various methodological options at their disposal to meet the demand of their specific teaching situations. (p. 67)

A further important factor is class size. Numbers can vary depending on the type of school, but it appears that there are frequently more than 50 students in secondary school language classes.

Along with the large class sizes, we noted that testing and national exams are a major part of the English language teaching context in China (Cheng, Ren & Wang, 2004; Ni, 2003; Wu, 2001). National tests, such as the College English Test Bands 4 and 6, with a focus on reading and writing, are held twice a year across China. They are of huge importance for college students as they impact their ability to find employment or to graduate. Examinations and tests also have an impact on teachers, as they are used to evaluate the quality of teaching and the teachers' effectiveness. When the teachers were asked how their teaching was evaluated in their schools, "it turned out that 90.7% of the teachers were evaluated by their students' test and examination scores" (Cheng et al. 2004, p. 8). This indicates the important role that standardized testing plays in teaching and learning in Chinese secondary schools.

Language Teacher Education in China

Cheng et al., (2003), Li (1999), Wu (2001), and Yu (2001) give a picture of the complexities of pre-service language teacher education in China. They note both the lack of qualifications, as well as the varying qualifications with which teachers enter the classroom. According to Yu (2001, p.197) citing Liu and Gong (2000), "out of 550,000 middle school teachers ... 55% of senior middle school English teachers are professionally qualified." Cheng and Wang (2004) in a study of 47 secondary teachers of English state that 69% of the teachers have a certificate from a teachers' college and nearly 17% have a bachelor's degree. Key factors in language teacher education are that qualifications have a strong focus on the development of teachers' English language skills, on content knowledge and on teachers' academic proficiency. Assessment procedures for teacher training are exams that test academic proficiency in psychology, philosophy of education, and teaching methodology.

Several researchers have noted the small practical component in language teacher education. "The majority of [the teachers] who graduated after the 1980s and 1990s ... received formal

training in the English language skills and culture of the target language, [yet] their formal training in EFL pedagogy is still far from enough” (Cheng, et al., 2003, p. 5). Li (1999) mentions that, on average, teachers have a practicum of “5-7 weeks for a two to three year teacher education program and 6-8 weeks for a four-year program” (p. 189). Sharpe and Ning (1998) note there is the assumption that “after a brief period of teaching practice, ‘practical skills will develop’ once the student has embarked on full-time teaching” (p. 62). Once teachers are in service, beginning teachers are mentored by more experienced teachers to develop their classroom skills, and the main in-service professional development activities are observing other teachers’ classes and working with colleagues.

Participants

The participants on the in-service course in New Zealand came from the background described above. They were selected by their institution. There were eight teachers, seven women and one man. Seven had a bachelor’s degree, while one had a three-year teacher training certificate. Teaching experience ranged from 2 to 13 years. They were teaching students aged 16 and above in a vocational polytechnic in Shanghai and on average had more than 45 students in their classes. The majority of teachers had never been abroad to an English -speaking country.

The In-Service Course

The course ran daily for three weeks from 9 a.m. to 4p.m. In the morning classes, teachers looked at aspects of ELT methodology. In the afternoon they observed English language lessons at a range of levels, ranging from Beginners to English for Academic Purposes. This was followed by discussions with the faculty on teaching methodology, teacher and student roles, and curriculum. In addition there were out-of-class activities such as shared meals with university faculty, visits to local places of interest and one weekend trip to a tourist destination.

Course Content and Methodology

The course content we devised was based on a needs analysis that we sent to the teachers before they came. The teachers were asked what language teaching and learning areas they would like to know more about. As well, there were questions on their background and expectations of their time in New Zealand. The resulting course content covered ten main areas and was delivered in a number of different ways to demonstrate CLT and Task-Based Learning. Many of the sessions involved loop input, with the Chinese teachers taking part in interactive tasks and follow-up discussions (See Figure 1.).

Figure 1. Course Content and Methodology

COURSE CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY	
Content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History of Methodology • Reflective Practice • Approaches to 4 Skills • Vocabulary development • Phonology • Assessments • Content-based teaching • Cross-cultural communication • Using course resources • Expectations of students in New Zealand 	Methodology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings • Reflective journals • Observations • Discussions • Task-based learning • Project work • Loop input

Research Methodology

We felt that the best way to gain insights into the teachers' perceptions of the impact of the course was to gather qualitative data from written material, both during the course and after it. Diaries and journals are frequently used to encourage teacher development and also to provide useful data for the researcher (Borg, 2001; Halbach, 1999; Moon, 1999; Nunan, 1992). The journal format gave the teachers on our course an opportunity to write freely about their learning and offered us a unique and in-depth view of their experiences. In total we used four instruments to gather the written data.

Firstly, as mentioned under Course Content and Methodology above, there was the pre-course needs analysis. Secondly, once the teachers were on the course they wrote reflective journals. There was a minimum of six entries from each participant. They wrote about their time in the classroom and their experiences in New Zealand. At the end of the course, the teachers were asked to write a summary of their journals in the form of a letter to a colleague. In the letter they reflected on their time in New Zealand, and the impact this had had on their ideas of teaching and learning. Thirdly, on their return to China, the teachers completed three post-course reflections in the following six months. During these six months, they could write reflections on any class that they were teaching, and they could focus on any aspect of teaching and learning. Finally, individual post-course questionnaires were sent to the teachers. We asked them to provide details about the classes they had completed their reflections on, and to clarify points they had made in their reflections. The total amount of data collected for analysis was approximately 26,000 words.

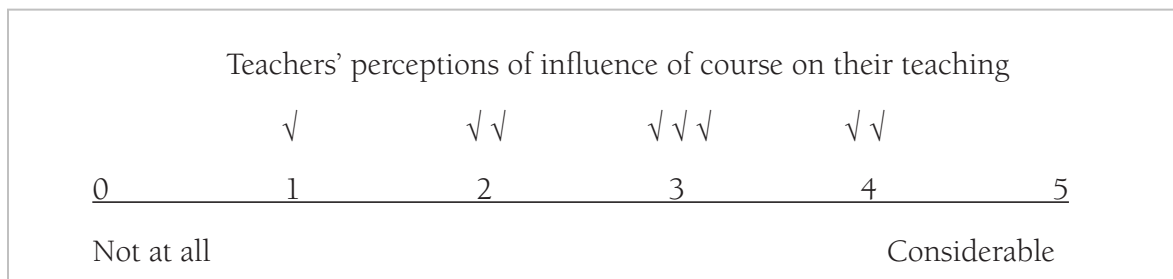
We followed a phenomenological procedure for data analysis. Each researcher identified recurring themes by analyzing all the pre-course and on-course data line by line (Tolich & Davison, 1998). Together we coded the themes, taking into account both explicit and implicit meaning. We then followed the same procedure, analyzing and coding the teachers' post-course

reflections. The next step was to compare the two sets of data to see if there were any common themes. We looked for links between the course in New Zealand and what the teachers said they were doing in their classrooms in China. We then analyzed the data from the final questionnaire to gain deeper insights into the teachers' classroom practice. Finally, we sent each participant a description of the analysis to check that it was an accurate account of their experience. All participants verified that the descriptions were accurate.

Findings

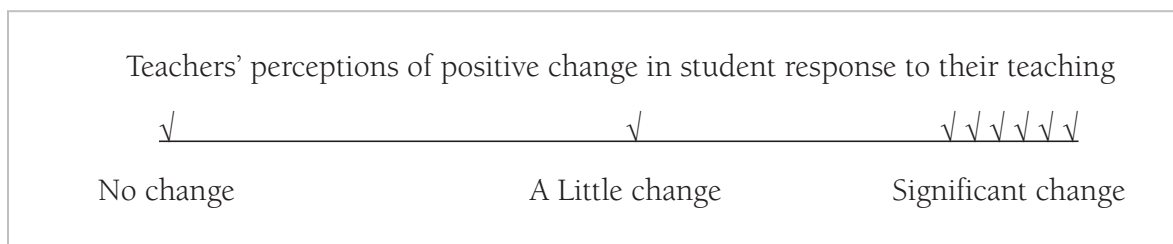
The final questionnaire on teachers' perceptions of the influence of the course revealed that overall the teachers felt that the course had impacted their teaching positively. This ranged from one teacher who thought the course had a small influence, through to five teachers who thought the course had affected their teaching a good deal or considerably. (See Figure 2a)

Figure 2a: Findings: Questionnaire



All except one teacher noticed that students' responses to their teaching changed. (Fig 2b). The change was positive and was supported with comments from the teachers about their students becoming more interested and active in class, and more confident in speaking.

Figure 2b: Findings: Questionnaire



When we analyzed the needs analysis, we found there were four themes that the teachers wanted to know more about. All the teachers mentioned the experience in a new culture. They were looking forward to traveling around New Zealand, seeing the sights and meeting new people. All were interested in learning new teaching activities, for example, new ways to deal with the four macro language skills in the classroom. How to motivate students was a major concern for most of the teachers. They wanted to know how to get students interested and committed to learning English. The final theme is closely linked to motivation. The teachers wanted to know how to encourage students to use English actively in class, how to get them interacting and speaking more.

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The on-course reflections revealed the same four themes. However, two other themes emerged. First, the teachers reflected on the roles of the teachers and students they observed in the classes at our university. Many of the teachers commented on the different interaction patterns in the classroom. They were also interested in the teacher's role in facilitating learning. The second area they remarked on was resources. They noted we had a wide range of textbooks, tapes, pictures, and computer software. They were also very impressed with the teacher-prepared materials that were shared among colleagues. (See Figure 3.)

Figure 3: Findings: Pre and On-course Data

Noted in Needs Analysis	Noted in On-course Reflections
Experience in a new culture	√
Teacher techniques	√
How to motivate students	√
Active use of language	√
X	Teacher/Student roles
X	Resources

The data from the final reflections written by the teachers once they were back in China revealed that there were further differences. Teachers commented on some of the same themes, but not on others. Techniques, motivation, and active language use were themes they said they wanted before the course, they had noted them on the course, and they indicated they were applying them after the course. In addition, they were making reference to teacher/student roles both on the course and afterwards. (See Figure 4.)

Figure 4: Findings: Post-course Data

Noted in Needs Analysis	Noted in On-course Reflections	Noted in Post-course Reflections
Experience in a new culture	√	X
Teacher techniques	√	√
How to motivate students	√	√
Active use of language	√	√
X	Teacher/Student roles	√
X	Resources	X

A typical post-course comment on using different techniques was from Ken:

I used to make my students listen again and again to listening tapes. My students felt very bored. They were sleepy in my listening class... However this terrible situation has changed since I learned a new method in AUT... I have begun to make listening materials as Clare and Heather... Now the effect of this class is perfect... my students aren't sleepy any longer. (Ken)

Two students, Kate and Carol, revealed in their post-course reflections that they were exploring new ways to motivate their students, considering teacher student roles, and encouraging students to use language actively.

In AUT I found that the teachers often used various kinds of activities to motivate students and to help them use the language. Now when I teach my students, I always try to design some activities for my students to participate.... In my teaching practice, I find that classroom activity is a really good way to make my teaching more student-centre. (Kate)

I assigned my students a task... go to the supermarket in your neighbourhood and do some research... I gave my students some outlines.... Referring to the text and some supplementary readings, some students did quite a good job. I felt that the task helped students to use the language that they learned. (Kate)

Now my students are more active in class than before, they are willing to communicate with others in English and raise their hands to answer my questions in class. (Carol)

The data indicated to us that there had been transfer of learning from the course to their teaching in China. However, there were two areas where there was no perceived influence of their learning on their teaching in the Chinese context. Figure 4 shows that the experience in the new culture, and resources were the two areas that teachers had mentioned either in the needs analysis or during the course, but had not mentioned in their post-course reflections.

It was interesting that experience in a new culture was not noted in post-course reflections back in China. During the course, all the teachers wrote very positively about their time in New Zealand.

Today I had an unforgettable experience. All of us were invited to Clare's house. It was the first time for me to be invited to a foreigners' home for dinner and this foreigner was our teacher! What kind, friendly and lovely New Zealanders.... (Ken)

In spite of comments like this, none of the teachers mentioned anything about the visit to a new culture when they were teaching their students in China. It appeared that they were not reflecting on this or seeing it as a useful resource.

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With regard to resources, two teachers had left the course committed to building up a bank of shared teaching materials. Jane noted the abundance of resources available at AUT in the library and in the language school's resource room, and commented that "some of the material available to us is out of date which can make it harder for students.... When we return to our school, I will try to give some suggestions to our leader." However, no mention was made of this in the post-course reflections. Later, after deeper questioning at the end of the six-month project, Jane said, "We need more financial support, and Principal X hasn't had time to talk with us about this matter."

Influences on Transfer

When we looked at the data, we wanted to consider what could have influenced transfer: why some aspects had been transferred, and why other areas appeared to have had no influence. We also wanted to find out ways to improve the impact of future courses.

There were three things that appeared to hinder teachers' ability to implement aspects of the course. One was personal health reasons – one teacher was out of action in her classroom for almost a term. Secondly, as we mentioned before, two teachers said there had been no time or financial assistance to get support to set up a bank of shared teaching materials and computer resources. Thirdly, one teacher's academic background may have had an influence. Whereas the other teachers had a bachelor's qualification, this teacher had a three-year teaching certificate. Also, she was insecure about her own use of oral English. In her post-course reflection there was no evidence of transfer, but she did provide some useful data. A major concern for her was that she would make mistakes in the class. We feel that this lack of confidence and knowledge of English may have inhibited her in transferring course information into her teaching.

As we noted when discussing English language teaching in China, the testing and national exam system influences the teachers and learners significantly. This focus could have prevented teachers from taking time to develop oral interaction and active language use with their students. Class size, length of teaching experience, and the amount of English that teachers spoke both inside and outside the classroom could also have had an effect on implementing learning from the professional development course. However, the data in this small study did not reveal any pattern within the group. Some of the teachers taught exam classes, some had large classes, and some teachers didn't speak much English in the classroom, but all their reflections showed that they were applying some of their new learning and that the course had had a positive effect on their teaching.

There are several factors that we thought contributed to the positive long-term effects of the course. The first was the fact that the course was tailor-made. It was created especially for this particular group of teachers, based on what they perceived as their needs. So it was relevant. Secondly, the teachers were very motivated and committed. They saw a need for new ideas and ways to encourage their students to use English actively and so were receptive to new information. The new English-speaking environment also played an important part. Instead of their normal teaching environment with its stresses, strains and commitments, teachers were with colleagues in an English-speaking country. They had a chance to experience the culture

of the target language and opportunities to practice their own English. The methodology used to deliver content may also have contributed to the success of the course. Experiential learning gave the teachers an opportunity to understand new ways of learning and offered exposure to a range of different techniques. Doing the tasks made it easier for teachers to see how to apply them in their own classrooms. This is endorsed by Carrier (2003) and Freeman and Richards (1993), who suggest that making the learning experience conscious can influence teachers' personal beliefs and behavior. Affective factors cannot be overlooked. There was a strong collegial atmosphere between the Chinese and New Zealand teachers. The New Zealand teachers found similarities between teaching in Shanghai and teaching in New Zealand, which made for open discussion. During their stay, the Chinese teachers had good pastoral care. The accommodation was close to the school, they were able to cook together, and there was bilingual support to familiarize teachers with the new environment.

As well as being positive for the Chinese teachers, the course had benefits for other stakeholders. The opportunity for university faculty from the two different countries to interact was particularly enriching for the host country. It enabled AUT teaching faculty to gain a better understanding of the background from which many of the School's English language students come. At a higher level, both institutions indicated the course had been successful. They were pleased with the fostering of educational communication and joint programs which both the Chinese Ministry of Education and the New Zealand Government encouraged.

Recommendations for Future Courses

What are the implications for language teacher educators preparing and providing off-shore in-service courses for teachers from China? We felt there are a number of ways to continue to develop and improve the impact of courses.

1. Devise a course directly related to the participants' needs that emerge from a pre-course needs analysis.
2. Use varied methodology; in particular provide opportunities for the teachers to experience for themselves tasks and techniques that they could implement with their learners.
3. Include a more reflective focus on ways to transfer the teachers' learning from the course into their own teaching context. For example, for a future group from China, we would:
 - Add a clearly focused question on transfer in the reflective journal. This may prompt the teachers to think about how they could use ideas, such as the cultural experience, when they are back with their own students.
 - Add one or two sessions in the timetable for teachers to discuss the application of new techniques to their teaching context. For example, teachers could discuss the practicalities of developing resources in their home country, and look at the steps they could take to support each other in developing and sharing materials.
 - Provide a form for teachers to complete after course sessions to encourage them to reflect on how they could apply their new learning. (See Appendix.)

Conclusion

With reference to the title of this paper, *Was it really worth it...?*, the findings show that most of the Chinese teachers perceived that they had transferred some knowledge from the course to their teaching. We feel that a good part of this was because the teachers came to an English-speaking environment, the course content was relevant to the teachers, and the delivery of the course fit their learning needs.

Was it really worth it from our point of view? We believe so. The course and the follow-up reflections confirmed that we were able to respond to the Chinese teachers' needs. It also confirmed to us that even in different countries and contexts, language teachers have the same sorts of concerns: how to motivate their students, how to ensure students use language actively, and how to develop and maintain a positive classroom atmosphere. We also feel it was worthwhile, as this initial course and the subsequent research have provided us with a strong underpinning for future courses.

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Appendix

Title of Session:

Venue:

Presenter:

Date:

How did the presenter do it?

1. Aim of session

2. Has this got an application? (What? Who for? Where?)

3. How could I apply it? (Adapt this format? Take key ideas and produce own format?)

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Educating Second Language Writing Teachers: Issues and Suggestions

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Preparing Teachers of Second Language Writing: An Introduction

This paper aims to address some of the issues specific to preparing teachers of second language writing. I begin with a synopsis of some core issues raised in recent literature on preparing second language (L2) writing teachers (e.g. Matsuda, 2003). I then suggest that L2 writing teachers need a program of study which gives them first-hand experience with a wide range of approaches to teaching writing, as well as the opportunity for reflection on and exploration of their own experiences as writers and teachers of writing. It is my hope that the questions raised and the program of study proposed here may inspire L2 writing teachers and teacher educators to approach their work in innovative ways.

One of the most important problems L2 writing teachers face is that professional preparation opportunities for teachers of second language writing are lacking. According to Matsuda (2003), “until recently, only [a] few post-baccalaureate professional preparation programs in TESL or related fields offered a course in second language writing in [the] US” (p. 22). Because of this lack of professional preparation, “teachers of L2 writing were found to rely heavily on textbooks” and “their own classroom experience” as their “pedagogical sources of knowledge” (p. 23). The situation is even worse in most masters programs in EFL contexts: Here, at best students take a highly controlled writing course to learn rhetorical conventions and grammatical structures of writing in English, but they receive no special information related to teaching writing. This situation is parallel with the insignificant secondary role writing has played in foreign language classes for many years (Silva, 1990; White & Caminero, 1995).

A second problem for L2 writing teachers is that there is no valid comprehensive theory of L2 writing pedagogy that can guide them (Matsuda, 2003; Silva, 1990). In earlier times, writing was done using a controlled composition model; text was seen as “a collection of sentence patterns and vocabulary items—a linguistic artifact, and a vehicle for language practice” (Silva, 1990, p. 13) with no concern for purpose or audience. Then, current traditional rhetoric (product-oriented writing or discourse-oriented writing) in the mid 1960’s brought an emphasis on extended written discourse in which the logical construction and organization of discourse, the modes of writing such as narration, argument etc. and usage, style, and the final product became the focus of interest (Silva, 1990). In the late 1970’s and 1980’s, with developments in cognitive psychology, the interest shifted from textual features to underlying processes of composing. Writing started to be seen as a non-linear, complex, exploratory, and creative process in which writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they make meaning (Flower, 1979; Perl, 1980;

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Zamel, 1982). This approach called for:

[A] positive, encouraging, and collaborative workshop environment within which students, with ample time and minimal interference, can work through their composing processes. The teacher's role is redefined as a coach to help and provide strategies in different stages of writing. (Silva, 1990, p. 15)

However, the process approach was also criticized because it was too focused on the writer and it ignored the expectations of the reader, and in particular the social role of writing in an academic discourse community (Hyland, 2003; Leki, 2001). Horowitz (1986) criticized the process approach for failing to prepare students to meet expectations of academic writing and for giving a false impression about how their writing would be evaluated in academic contexts. Recently, genre approaches to writing have started to gain popularity with the influence of the “social turn” (Timbur, 1994, p. 109, cited in Atkinson, 2003) that has taken place in second language acquisition research. Writing is viewed as an activity to be done according to different purposes in different social contexts, influenced by writer-reader relations (Halliday, 1994; Hyland, 2003).

However, all these approaches are limited because they focus on only a single element of writing such as lexical-syntactic features, discourse-level text structures, process approaches, a genre approach to reader expectations, and the social role of writing (Hyland, 2003; Silva, 1990). Another problem is that none of these approaches is based on solid theory or adequate research. Furthermore, there is no valid and reliable research to support the effectiveness of any approach in improving student writing. These limitations of theory and research in ESL composition hinder teachers from gaining a complete understanding of what is involved in L2 writing, thus limiting their effectiveness (Silva, 1990).

Third, as traditional methods have been dominant for a long time in composition classes, most teachers were taught in such classes, where their beliefs about writing and how writing should be taught were shaped according to their “apprenticeship of observation” as described by Lortie (cited in Kennedy, 1998, p. 3). However, as mainstream writing scholars have pointed out, “teachers who have not experienced meaningful writing projects themselves may not appreciate the writing problems their students face” (Kennedy, 1998, p. 14), and if they have “not observed other teachers helping students with those problems, they will not know how teachers are supposed to talk to students, ... how to diagnose student learning, ... how to respond to student needs, ... how to engage and support students, ... [or] how to extend student thinking and writing.” (p. 14). All these difficulties, coupled with lack of teacher education support and lack of awareness of the recent research in teaching writing, will influence these teachers to teach as they were taught.

Fourth, it is often reported that writing teachers do not like writing and they do not write themselves, even in L1 classes; thus, they have poorly developed ideas about what writing processes are. However, scholars suggest that teachers can only help students by first writing and understanding the writing process themselves (Crowhurst, 1988; Hairston, 1982). Crowhurst (1988) found that when teachers are engaged in real, self-motivated writing, their views of revision change.

Moreover, because many teachers do not enjoy writing, for most teachers it is often a source of anxiety. To lessen their anxiety, teachers often prefer traditional writing activities that are comfortable and predictable to authentic writing activities that can move in “too many different directions” (Kennedy, 1998, p. 4), causing unpredictability and instability in classes. Traditional prescriptive writing offers teachers at least a method of keeping students busy, being in control of classroom activities, and feeling successful (Kennedy, 1998; Smith, 1981). In addition, most teachers prefer quiet classes, and having authority and control over students. “This ideal is threatened in writing classes when students are allowed to share drafts with one another” (Kennedy, 1998, p. 12), thus making more noise, and when they are given choices about which direction they want their writing to take. It is a fact that “changing authority relations” and managing uncertainty are not simple issues (Kennedy, 1998, p. 12).

Writing Courses in Second Language Teacher Education

There have been some attempts to contribute to L2 writing teachers’ professional development. For example, Raimes (2002) offers ten suggestions to L2 writing teachers about important decision-making steps to take while designing a writing course. These suggestions also aim to educate writing teachers. She talks about institutional constraints, different approaches to writing and their consequences, course goals, the necessity of an engaging content, weighing the elements of writing according to students’ needs, decisions concerning the type of syllabus (functional, topical, structural, based on skills or processes or tasks), materials, feedback methods, activities, and course evaluation. She also mentions the importance of reflecting on experiences through writing, and by sharing the writing experiences with students.

Although these are all valuable suggestions, given the difficult circumstances surrounding L2 writing teachers it would be too optimistic to expect that when given Raimes’ list of suggestions, L2 writing teachers who do not know much about writing or teaching writing will understand the concepts and apply these suggestions into their teaching easily. If we look at the teacher education field in general, recent research findings have revealed that knowledge about teaching and learning cannot be simply transmitted to teachers by others; rather, it is socially constructed and “it entails lived practices” (Johnson & Golombek, 2002, p. 2). For example, Shi and Cumming (1995) reported negative results in changing L2 writing teachers’ belief structures and practices when they tried to change L2 writing teachers’ practices through merely providing them with a written rationale for the innovation and several follow up discussions.

Therefore, it is obvious that L2 writing teachers need more than a ten-step guide in syllabus design. They need a stronger teacher education plan. As well as serving as a recipe for teachers to follow, Raimes’ suggestions can also be used as part of such an educational plan. The previous literature relating to preparation of L2 writing teachers provides some insights into what is involved in changing writing teachers’ ideas about teaching and what conditions are necessary for this change to happen. The literature particularly highlights the effectiveness of a *writing course for teachers of writing* in which they are given a chance to observe, reflect and relearn how to write, relearn how to teach writing in light of recent literature on teaching writing, and learn how to continue their life-long professional development.

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For example, Winer (1992) reports positive results in efforts to change teacher beliefs in a TESL writing practicum with the help of a writing class. She examined whether being trained through structured observation in a writing class and through the process of writing journals reflecting on activities and practices can change students' awareness and attitudes toward writing and the teaching of writing. In this writing class, students wrote themselves to learn by doing and also studied the theory of teaching writing. In their initial questionnaire, students highlighted four areas as problems in writing: dread of writing, boring or intimidating topics, insecurity about writing skills, and insecurity about teaching skills. Their attitudes were hindering their ability to perform effectively as teachers of writing. The study found that both training and development in teacher education could be useful for writing teachers because training in specific techniques can lead to greater self-awareness; a greater understanding of one's own writing process can result in changes in one's teaching. The five instructional strategies that the students identified as the most helpful in changing their negative attitudes towards writing were: designing and responding to writing tasks, mandatory revision, guided peer coaching, guided practice in topic development, and keeping journals to understand the writing process.

Brock (1994) conducted a study in which secondary school EFL teachers in Hong Kong were provided with a six-month supervised training, including writing instruction in the process approach, discussions of theoretical approaches, and support and guidance in implementing a process approach in classrooms. Teachers were also asked to write their reflections in diaries during this program. The results revealed that at least among some of the participants, there were reports of changes in attitudes about teaching writing, as well as a definite shift from a transmission mode to an interpretative mode of teaching. Therefore, it was concluded that if teachers are adequately supported at all stages in implementing a curricular innovation, if they are trained in that innovation, and if they are encouraged to reflect critically on their implementation of the innovation, teachers can change both their attitudes and classroom practices even when they are under constraints such as large classes, public examination pressures, and cultural resistance.

In a similar way, Scott and Rodgers (1995) provided secondary school language teachers with a 9-week collaborative project involving a process approach writing course in which teachers wrote, and learned about theory and techniques related to holistic assessment and positive feedback in ESL writing. Then teachers were asked to apply these new techniques in their classes. Pre- and post-assessment writing attitude surveys showed positive changes in teacher attitudes as well as changes in their methods of teaching and grading writing assignments.

These studies provide evidence that when teachers of writing are provided with a writing course in which they practice writing themselves in a nontraditional meaningful and motivating atmosphere; read and discuss the relevant literature; reflect on their learning and teaching experiences; and share others' experiences (Britton, 1988), their negative attitudes as well as their practices may change.

A Two-step Plan for Educating L2 Writing Teachers

As Kennedy (1990) states, “by the time a teacher receives her/his bachelor’s degree, she has observed teachers and participated in their work for up to 3060 days” (p. 17, as cited in Bailey et al., 1996, p. 11). This apprenticeship of observation functions as a guide for teachers once they start their teaching practice. Therefore, as a first step of educating L2 writing teachers, a writing class should offer teachers a chance both to replace their old observation of apprenticeship with a new model of writing and teaching writing, and also to understand the application of abstract concepts such as teacher-student conferencing and peer feedback by actually taking part in these activities. Self-reflective narratives and various actual writing practices followed by theory of writing may help teachers see their personal practices from a larger theoretical perspective. However, as opposed to previous studies that included a writing course for teachers merely based on the process approach, a variety of different approaches and practices should be included in the class, as a means of modeling a sound approach for L2 writing teachers in their future classroom practices. The second step in the writing class, on the other hand, should involve providing L2 writing teachers with tools to continue their professional development through teacher narratives and action research. I now provide a detailed rationale as to why such an approach is necessary.

First, because teachers’ beliefs and teaching behaviors have been established over time and they are resistant to change (Britton, 1988; Freeman, 1996; Pajares, 1992), we should try to raise their awareness of the past experiences that have shaped what they currently think and do. To achieve this, as Bailey et al. (1996) suggest, we can start the course by making teachers write “autobiographies including timelines of their learning and teaching histories to identify trends, critical incidents, and salient factors influencing their development as teachers” (p. 13). According to Bailey et al., this conscious knowledge of their histories will help teachers to realize that they already have their own teaching philosophies, which were created to a significant degree as a result of their learning histories. This conscious knowledge may help them to overcome the tendency to imitate their past teachers (Bailey et al., 1996). It may also be helpful for teachers to share autobiographies with peers to facilitate an understanding of others’ perspectives as well (Britton, 1988).

Second, as Raimes (2002) suggests, a key component of any teacher-training course should be a massive amount of writing and reflecting on writing. Therefore, teachers should go through a series of meaningful writing activities through which they can recognize that writing is a skill that needs to be developed through constant revisions in order to communicate ideas fully to the reader (Flower, 1979; Murray, 2001). In addition, teachers should experience the fact that although writing is thought to follow a general sequence of prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing, it is not a linear process, but is composed of many overlapping recursive processes (Perl, 1980). While learning writing, teachers should use and understand the necessity of readings both to generate ideas and to serve as models for writing in a specific genre (Krashen, 1984; Hyland, 2003). They should experience not only expressive, but also academic writing.

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In order to understand that writing is a social activity, student teachers should be involved in peer collaboration that may provide them with a sense of audience and a purpose for communication (Englert et al, 1991; Raimes, 2002; Susser, 1994), and they should explicitly learn the requirements of certain genres and the expectations of the reader in the target discourse community. Accuracy and appropriateness should also be given emphasis and direct strategies and clear feedback related to writing and editing should be offered to enable student teachers to develop metacognitive awareness about writing and become self-regulated writers (Englert et al, 1991; Raimes, 2002; Raphael, 1989).

However, we should be very careful not to organize the class around a single approach like the previous studies did, but we should use eclectic approaches by providing a rationale for each. Research indicates that focusing on only process approaches will decrease accuracy, and this single focus sends the message that other areas are not important (Freeman & Richards, 1996). Using a variety of approaches may also help teachers gain “coherent perspectives, principles, models – tools for thinking about L2 writing, and analyzing and evaluating competing views” (Silva, 1990, p. 11). During this learning process, teachers can be asked to reflect on their processes of writing and learning writing (Raimes, 2002) and compare them to their old experiences to further raise awareness.

Third, Freeman (1996) states that a teacher education program needs a “unified discourse” (p. 236) or a professional language in order to operate from a common view of teaching and learning. We can achieve this by including reading and discussions of recent literature on L2 writing and L2 writing pedagogy, and connecting these to L2 teachers’ past learning and teaching experiences. As Raimes (2002) suggests, we can also discuss institutional constraints such as curricula, textbooks and proficiency exams, ways of reconciling theoretical implications with classroom realities, and possible strategies to cope with these constraints. In addition, we can have discussions about the ideological consequences of teaching or imposing English writing conventions as well as the differences in writing styles across the world, and the fact that writing is a reflection of an entire system of beliefs in a culture and identity (Raimes, 2002).

As a second and a very crucial last step of this education program, we should give teachers tools to continue to reflect on their thinking and teaching behaviors through conducting classroom research and writing teacher narratives in their future practice (Johnson & Golombek, 2002; Raimes, 2002). Socially situated perspectives or constructivist views suggest that “teachers not only possess knowledge, but they can also be creators of knowledge” (Johnson & Golombek, 2002, p. 2); therefore, these teachers can take what they have learned from their writing course and construct their own understanding of these experiences by combining them with their classroom experiences and personal attributes in different ways. That is why the second step of our education plan should target the actual teaching: teachers should be encouraged to engage in classroom research such as action research and writing teacher narratives in which they will reflect on their practices and try to find connections between their past learning, teacher education experiences, and current practices as a way of professional development. We should also provide them with information about research methods with regard to collecting, analyzing, and reflecting on data in order to conduct action research.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000; see also this volume) found that re-storying experiences were essential to teachers' personal and professional growth as these stories help teachers reflect and make sense of their experience and construct knowledge. This process of stepping back, description, reflection, and analysis may lead them to question and interpret their ways of knowing and gain more control and foresight in their actions (Freeman, 1996, 1998). According to Dewey, when teachers can approach narrative inquiry with "open mindedness (seeking alternatives)," with "responsibility (recognizing consequences)" and with "wholeheartedness (continual self examination)" (Dewey, 1933 cited in Johnson & Golombek, 2002, p.5), they can easily become theorists. Therefore, action research and writing narratives will contribute to L2 writing teachers' continuing professional development. This legitimate knowledge teachers gain from action research and narrative writing, when shared and published, will also enable teacher educators to understand teachers' needs and their actual behaviors in classrooms so that we can improve our disciplinary knowledge in educating them.

L2 writing teacher education involves some special problems, which require special attention. Given the complexity of the conditions surrounding L2 writing teachers, instead of a list of guidelines or educational opportunities or merely focusing on process approaches, a deeper plan aimed at changing beliefs and behavior structures of teachers should be considered. A writing course involving actual writing experiences, reflections on past learning and teaching experiences, exposure to multiple theoretical perspectives, and tools to be independent professionals and researchers – such a combination of components has a great potential to help teachers replace their old experiences and beliefs about writing, see their own practices in relation to the larger theoretical world, and continue their professional development.

However, research is needed in order to confirm the effectiveness of such a writing course on changing beliefs, attitudes, and practices of L2 writing teachers. Especially longitudinal studies, following teachers who have participated in this writing course for at least two years into their teaching would provide us with better insights. As Grossman (2000), Courtland et.al (1987) and Courtland and Welsh (1990) report, it may take a long time for teachers to be able to implement a new orientation, particularly if they have to deal with the tensions of first-year teaching. The autobiographies the teachers write at the beginning of the writing course and their final narratives should be compared to capture the development and changes the teachers go through and to understand what factors in our teacher education plan are most influential in the process of change.

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Designing Knowledge About Language (KAL) Curriculum in Language Teacher Education

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The knowledge base of language teachers has long been assumed to be built from academic coursework in the literature and grammar of the subject language. Modern language programs have expanded the knowledge base of language teaching to include *knowledge about language* (KAL). KAL refers to the implicit knowledge of language users, the ability to reflect on the use of language by themselves and others, and the study of language itself (Richmond, 1990, p. 40). The term may be best known from the publications stemming from education reform movements in the United Kingdom during the 1980's and 90's: *English from 5 to 16*, published in 1984, *The Kingman Report*, published in 1988, *The Cox Report* and *The National Curriculum for English* published the following year, and *The LINC (Language in the National Curriculum) Teacher Training Materials*, published up until 1992 (Carter, 1990; Bain, Fitzgerald, & Taylor, 1992). In the United States, the term *educational linguistics* may be more familiar (Spolsky, 1978; van Lier, 1994), but this term is not so clearly tied to the immediate language awareness of students and their teachers in classroom settings as is KAL.

This paper takes up the question of how KAL might be taught in teacher education programs and how KAL might be actually used by language teachers in classroom practice. Recent research on KAL in teacher education (Adger, Snow, & Christian, 2002; Bartels 2005; Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005) has identified at least three problems which obstruct teachers' learning and use of KAL: a logistical problem—how to fit more instruction into an already crowded course of study; a cognitive problem—how to ensure the transfer of KAL to actual classroom instructional practices; and a socio-cultural problem—how to cultivate ownership of KAL within the teaching profession. These problems must be addressed in efforts to design effective instruction in KAL for language teacher education. In this paper, I first highlight the key issues in the above problems. I then offer a general idea for designing curriculum that incorporates KAL in language teacher education.

Problems Incorporating KAL in Teacher Education

The Logistical Problem

In the lead chapter of the book edited by Adger, Snow, and Christian entitled *What Teachers Need to Know about Language*, Fillmore and Snow (2002) argue strongly that all teachers, not just language teachers, must have a solid base of knowledge about language in order to meet the high standards of teaching school-age learners in today's diverse society. The authors describe key questions that teachers should be able to answer, such as "What are the basic units of language?"; "What is academic English?" and "What makes a sentence or a text easy or difficult to understand?" They conclude with a list of seven course titles that they envision for a critically sufficient teacher training program:

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1. Languages and Linguistics
2. Language and Cultural Diversity
3. Sociolinguistics of Education in a Diverse Society
4. Language Development
5. Second Language Learning and Teaching
6. The Language of Academic Discourse
7. Text Analysis and Language Understanding in Educational Settings

The remainder of the book consists of responses to Fillmore and Snow's call, written by teacher educators and education leaders. All the respondents readily endorse the importance of KAL in education; but just as quickly, they agree that additional coursework in KAL is not logistically feasible in current teacher preparation programs. Their arguments include competing and conflicting interests in teacher training curriculum and institutional resistance to interdisciplinary applied sciences in professional colleges. The latter argument includes the lack of qualified instructors who are able to teach linguistics as directly relevant to classroom practices. These arguments taken as a whole are what I refer to as the logistical problem of KAL in language teacher education—there is no room for extra courses in teacher education and effective instructors for KAL in teacher education are scarce.

The Cognitive Problem

Even when teachers do receive training in KAL, there is no guarantee that this knowledge about language directly impacts teaching practice. In her response to Snow and Fillmore, Bredekamp (2002) provides a candid example of just how great the disconnect can be:

With an undergraduate degree in English, graduate degrees in education, and course work in linguistics and the teaching of reading, I was both surprised and embarrassed at how little of the knowledge they call for I had learned, currently remember, or readily use in my work. (p. 55)

The problem of cognitive transfer, that is, the failure of teachers to apply knowledge about language in their professional education practices, is given a thorough, critical review in the 2005 volume, *Applied Linguistics and Language Teacher Education*, edited by Nat Bartels. In this volume, researchers present 21 studies of language teachers' learning and use of knowledge about language (KAL) in their teaching practices. In his concluding review chapter, Bartels states:

The teachers in these studies did not engage in deliberate practice involving using their KAL to solve common problems of teaching practice. Perhaps while learning to teach they focused on problems of procedure (how to do things), but not on problems of understanding. (p. 415)

Bartels goes on to review the results of the KAL studies in terms of what cognitive psychologists have learned about knowledge transfer and use in expert systems. He concludes by listing the cognitive implications of KAL instruction for teachers:

...a significant amount of time in applied linguistics classes needs to be invested in helping novice teachers develop and engage in a variety of deliberate practice activities...work on solving the kinds of problems of procedure and understanding that language teachers regularly face in their practice. (p. 416)

The message is clear that the cognitive problem of KAL in language teacher education must be addressed in the design of curriculum and assessment; how we teach KAL in teacher education will affect how KAL will be used in the practice of classroom teaching.

The Socio-Cultural Problem

The third problem addressed in the literature on KAL in teacher education can be described in terms of the socio-cultural dynamics of expertise. When KAL is presented as information to fill *deficits* in teachers' knowledge, teacher educators run the risk of teacher resistance instead of teacher buy-in. In the chapter on "Language Teacher Education" in the 2004 *Handbook of Applied Linguistics*, Johnstone discusses the negative influence of in-service courses designed as remedies for ineffective teaching. Citing Brown & McIntyre (1993), he writes, "The deficit model of teacher education makes it difficult for teachers to recognize their own skillfulness and discourages them from considering their own teaching analytically" (p. 657). The deficit model does not have to be externally imposed by an administrative procedure to create resistance to learning KAL. Learners can impose the deficit model on themselves as they react to the process of discovering new knowledge in KAL: knowledge which is critical to the practice of teaching, knowledge of which they (and everyone they know) have been previously unaware, and which they may not be able to access without the help of experts. If learners find themselves feeling shocked, ignorant, and dependent, they may have just cause for resisting further exploration in KAL.

To review, there is a broad consensus that KAL is a critical part of the knowledge base of teaching practice in education today. However, due to the logistical, cognitive, and socio-cultural problems which have been outlined above, teachers either do not receive this critical instruction or do not have the right learning conditions for internalizing the material. KAL instruction in teacher education must take these problems into account. The importance of the knowledge is clearly agreed upon (see Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Adger, Snow, & Christian, 2002; Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005), so the teaching of KAL must be taken seriously. What follows is a presentation of a general idea for developing a curriculum for KAL in language teacher education—an idea which has the potential to overcome the barriers imposed by the problems of logistics, cognitive transfer, and socio-cultural ownership.

Curriculum Solutions

The general idea of a KAL curriculum that I propose is that KAL instructional activities and assessments must be clearly derived from the tasks (or sub-skills of tasks) used in preparing a professional teaching portfolio. What follows is a rationale for using a KAL curriculum derived from portfolio tasks, as well as some suggestions for how this curriculum might look. First, the tasks which can be derived from portfolio preparation must be clarified or defined. For a high quality portfolio model which applies broadly to teaching practice, I have looked to the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) as a source of protocols for portfolio preparation. National Board Certification is a highly esteemed credential in education in the United States and it is available to teachers practicing in programs which range from early childhood to young adults.

The assessment process for National Board Certification involves the compilation of a teaching portfolio during the course of one school year and participation in one day of assessment-centered activities. NBPTS portfolios assess a teacher's performance based on three distinct sources of evidence, each of which is individually contextualized and situated by the teacher, using written commentary. The three types of evidence submitted in an NBPTS portfolio are:

1. Samples of students' work, including assessments
2. Videotapes of classroom practice, transcribed
3. Documentation of accomplishments outside the classroom

In other words, artifacts related to teaching are used in the preparation of teaching portfolios. I am suggesting that these artifacts related to teaching should also be the materials upon which we design KAL instruction; specifically that the starting point and concluding point of KAL units of instruction should come from classroom artifacts: samples of student work in context, samples of classroom interaction in context (both video sources and transcripts), and samples of teacher planning and reflection.

Now the tasks we need for KAL instruction which can be derived from portfolio preparation can be specifically stated.

1. Examine these classroom artifacts (work samples, tapes, transcripts, plans, reflections).
2. Ask questions about the context in which they were collected.

3. With the help of your instructor, consider how the artifacts as data bear on the questions which classroom teachers should know about language (adapted from Adger et al., 2000, pp. 20-39):
 - a. What are the basic units of language?
 - b. What is regular and what isn't? What are the recognizable patterns of language?
 - c. How is vocabulary acquired, learned, and used?
 - d. How is language used differently by groups of people in different places and different situations (including language learners)?
 - e. What is academic language?
 - f. What is necessary to learn a new language successfully?
 - g. How is spelling learned and why is English spelling so complicated?
 - h. Why do some students have more trouble than others in performing classroom tasks?
 - i. Why do students have trouble structuring narrative and expository writing?
 - j. How should one judge the quality and correctness of a student's work?
 - k. What makes language easy or difficult to understand?
4. With the help of your instructor, select the specific data which bears on the question or questions you are addressing.
5. Answer the questions through analysis of your data.

The proposed tasks based on teaching artifacts are significantly different from purely linguistic analysis for two reasons. First, a KAL curriculum must rely on materials which are authentic to the actual enterprise of teaching and learning. Second, the questions which are used to guide the analysis of data in a KAL curriculum are framed by the tasks of understanding student learning, student performance, and the role of the instructor. For example, a KAL lesson plan might begin with the introduction of teaching portfolio materials from a sixth grade public school language arts teacher who, unusually, teaches without using a language arts textbook. Artifacts from this portfolio include student writing samples collected over a period of months from pupils with different language backgrounds and academic abilities. As teacher-learners explore and analyze the student materials, they develop their existing knowledge and learn more about language.

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Table 1: KAL Tasks and Objectives

KAL Task	KAL Objectives
Sort the writing samples by type. Some are “How to” essays, some are autobiographical essays, and some are reports. Identify differences and similarities in student writing across these three <i>genres</i> , or types of writing.	a. What are the basic units of language? d. How is language used differently by groups of people in different places and different situations (including language learners)? e. What is academic language?
Select one genre and compare the writing of different students. Note your responses to each piece of writing and rank each piece in order of which ones you like the best. Count the number of tensed clauses in each piece of writing. List the content vocabulary used by each writer. As you rank each writer according to measures of length and complexity, check to see if the ranking of authors is the same or different from your initial impression of the writing samples.	c. How is vocabulary acquired, learned, and used? h. Why do some students have more trouble than others in performing classroom tasks? i. Why do students have trouble structuring narrative and expository writing?
Compare the spelling accuracy of students who are native speakers of English with students who are learning English as a new language. Inventory the misspellings of two papers and identify unique and overlapping spelling patterns.	g. How is spelling learned and why is English spelling so complicated? b. What is regular and what isn’t? What are the recognizable patterns of language?
Sort the samples by author and choose one student to review. How did this student perform in relation to the other students in the set? What are the student’s strengths and needs?	f. What is necessary to learn a new language successfully? j. How should one judge the quality and correctness of a student’s work? k. What makes language easy or difficult to understand?

Discussion

This paper proposed to describe how a KAL curriculum should be taught if it is to overcome the major barriers which obstruct teachers’ learning and use of KAL in classroom practice. So far I have argued for authentic classroom artifacts as the basic source of instructional material and analytic tasks to be guided by the questions put forth in Adger, Snow and Christian (2000). I now return to the three problems identified at the beginning of the paper to see how changing materials and inquiry questions might make an important difference.

The logistical problem suggests that teacher education programs may have to add KAL courses to their existing teacher education curriculum. The remedy used most often for an overburdened curriculum is an integrated or infused curriculum. If the instructors who teach KAL courses use materials and tasks which are authentic to teacher-learners, there will be a natural integration of subjects which are typically separate: methods of instruction, curriculum design, lesson planning, assessment, etc. If the instructors who typically teach curriculum and instruction use tasks which include questions like: “How is content knowledge identified? How is language ability separate from content knowledge?” then again the curriculum has addressed KAL within the existing course list. Another aspect of the logistical problem points out that there are too few instructors who are able to link the necessary expertise in language with the necessary expertise in education, but such a view places too high a premium on formal credentials or training. Simply by adopting the materials of classroom practice and the guiding questions of what teachers need to know about language, instructor-linguists will have greater awareness of educational principles and practices, while instructor-educators will have greater awareness of the linguistic principles which are most salient in education.

Returning to the other two problems in teachers’ learning and use of KAL, I argue that tasks (the materials and the guiding questions) based on classroom artifacts have the potential to overcome these barriers as well. The cognitive problem, as Bartels puts it, is that teachers do not transfer knowledge about language into classroom practice. If KAL instruction is based on well-chosen classroom artifacts, cognitive transfer is more likely to occur because the learner is engaged in the business of teaching and learning throughout the KAL experience. Knowledge about language is embedded in the larger cognitive task of being an effective teacher. The learner may travel a great distance into abstract knowledge about language per se as the analysis unfolds, but the learner’s comprehension of KAL will always be embedded in teaching and first-hand experience. An additional cognitive support for positive transfer of KAL in teaching practice comes from the rich nature of classroom artifacts. The artifacts studied are necessarily accompanied by a “story” of the community, the classroom, the teacher, and the students involved. As Johnston and Goettsch (2000) point out, “The knowledge base of experienced teachers is interrelated and is most easily realized in *stories* of actual teaching events” (p.462, cited in Johnstone, 2004, emphasis added). Every KAL curriculum unit which begins and ends with the use of well-chosen classroom artifacts and guiding questions about language will necessarily generate elaborated stories of the teaching events from which the artifacts came—stories which are powerful cognitive tools for recall, reflection, personal identification and communication with others. A natural context for demonstrating KAL might be in the recounting of stories such as, “I remember studying about a teacher who... I remember a case in which a student...” Stories about teaching and learning may well be the most transferable form of knowledge about language.

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The last problem in KAL curriculum in language teacher education is the socio-cultural problem of teacher training. Externally imposed requirements, such as specific coursework or in-service training in applied or educational linguistics, reduces the participants' sense of their own. Whether novice or expert, pre-service or in-service, personal agency must be maintained for participants to willingly and fully engage in learning. The proposed KAL curriculum requires the use of classroom-based artifacts which would be suitable for preparing a teaching portfolio. The model I have used for portfolio reference is the NBPTS National Board Certification portfolio. The significance of this for the socio-cultural problem is that the National Board itself is a private (non-governmental), not-for-profit, voluntary organization (not established by any legislation), and participation in candidacy is a voluntary activity. Thus the practice of collecting and analyzing classroom artifacts is motivated by teachers themselves. Teachers who are wary of top-down research-based directives may feel more receptive to such a framework. Also, if KAL curriculum refers to the NBPTS and National Board Certification in its rationale for "well-chosen classroom artifacts suitable for inclusion in a teaching portfolio," then teacher-learners will discover that the National Board encourages candidates to prepare for candidacy in collaborative study groups. These external details support a knowledge base which is less hierarchical, more dependent on peer-review, and more learner-centered. Thus a shift in tasks, materials, and guiding questions can overcome the socio-cultural problems associated with the traditional deficit model of teacher education. In addition, the personal link between the materials collected by a particular teacher in a real classroom setting and the student analyzing those materials creates the basis of a story line which may provide additional cognitive support. Perhaps long after doing the exercises described above, a teacher may recall: "I remember an English teacher who didn't use a text book, and the students used their own writing for their curriculum." Embedded within that memory are the potential links to knowledge about language which were discovered and developed during that event. Following Johnston and Goettsch, "the knowledge base of experienced teachers is interrelated and is most easily realized in stories of actual teaching events" (p. 462).

Having established a rationale for the design of KAL curriculum tasks which have the potential to overcome current barriers in language teacher education, the next step is to use the proposed framework and develop action research reports on the teaching and learning of KAL within this framework. For anyone who might wish to contribute to this effort, a useful starting point for reviewing the NBPTS materials is the website at NBPTS.org. To gain access to specific teaching portfolio materials, consult the National Board Certified Teachers Networks to contact Board Certified teachers in your area.

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